

TWO CENTURIES OF FOXHUNTING

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By the Same Author :

THE PERFECT FOLLOWER

A TALE OF TWO BRUSHES

THE FOX THAT WALKED ON THE WATER

PETER BECKFORD, ESQUIRE

THE MEYNELL OF THE WEST

THE HUNTS OF THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

(*With* JULIAN INGERSOLL CHAMBERLAIN)

LETTERS FROM AN OLD SPORTSMAN TO A YOUNG ONE

HUNTING IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

(*With* JULIAN INGERSOLL CHAMBERLAIN)

AS HOUNDS RAN

TRY BACK

THE HILL VIXEN

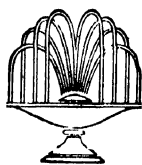


GEORGE WASHINGTON, ESQUIRE, AND LORD FAIRFAX
Fox-hunting in Virginia about 1747

TWO CENTURIES OF FOXHUNTING

by

A. HENRY HIGGINSON



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To My Wife
MARY NEWCOMB HIGGINSON
IN MEMORY OF MANY HAPPY DAYS IN THE HUNTING FIELD
TOGETHER

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INTRODUCTION

AN AMERICAN writer—Allen Potts, Esq., of Richmond, Virginia—has pointed out in his excellent little book, *Fox Hunting in America*, that the sport seems to belong practically to the English-speaking race; for, while there have been packs of hounds maintained in France and Italy, these were, for the most part, used for the pursuit of other game; and, moreover, the Hunts of these Latin countries are of a somewhat artificial nature; while the sport of Great Britain and America is bred in the bone of the people and has played an important part in the affairs of these countries—many of whose greatest soldiers, statesmen, and jurists have been keen followers of fox-hunting.

The beginnings of the sport of fox-hunting are shrouded in mystery; but, for the last two hundred years, its history and development, in both England and America, can be traced with a fair degree of accuracy. It would be quite impossible, in one volume, to give even a rudimentary sketch of the growth which the many organisations for the furtherance of fox-hunting have undergone; or to tell of all the famous men and women who have been identified with the sport. And so, I have sought to present a series of fragmentary sketches which, joined together like the bits of a picture-puzzle, will give to the reader the story of fox-hunting in England and America for the last two centuries—since 1745.

I have chosen this period, because it so happens that in the year 1745, a great British sportsman—Lord Thomas Fairfax—wrote to one of his cousins who was living in Virginia, advising him that he had dispatched to America a couple and a half of hounds with which he hoped he

would be able to improve "the breed," and it was with the resulting pack—one of the first that hunted in Virginia—that George Washington, first President of The United States, had his early experiences in the hunting field.

CHAPTER ONE

AN ENGLISH NOBLEMAN SETTLES IN VIRGINIA AND A DISTINGUISHED AMERICAN BECOMES A MASTER OF HOUNDS

THERE SEEMS to be a very considerable difference of opinion as to the exact date when organised fox-hunting came into being in America. Robert Brooke, Esq., who came to Maryland in 1650, undoubtedly brought a pack of hounds with him, and he undoubtedly hunted foxes with them in the Western Hemisphere; but it is very doubtful—as one American author has pointed out—whether these imported hounds had been entered *solely* to fox, and, in any case, their influence on American Foxhounds of later days does not seem to me of sufficient importance to deal with them in detail. The first person of real importance in American fox-hunting history was, I think, Lord Thomas Fairfax; partly because of his own activities in the sport; partly because of his influence on the man who later became the first President of the United States.

Lord Fairfax was born at Denton, in Yorkshire, in 1692. He had inherited from his father a very considerable property in Yorkshire, but he had been forced to part with this in order to satisfy the former's debts. However, he had inherited from his mother—the heiress of Thomas, Second Baron Culpeper—large estates in Virginia, and in 1740 he visited America, staying for a time at the estate of his friend and relation, Mr. William Fairfax, who had settled in Virginia several years before. William Fairfax, although he had been but nine years in the Colony, had already become a Virginian, like his neighbours, and as Collector of His Majesty's Customs for the South Potomac, and President of The King's Council, he was a figure of im-

portance in that part of the country in which he dwelt. His daughter Anne had married a neighbour, Lawrence Washington, who lived near by at Mount Vernon, the estate which he had inherited from his father, Augustine Washington, and Lord Fairfax, who stayed with his cousin at Belvoir, where he amused himself with hunting as well as undertaking and directing the management of the farms which had now become the chief part of his patrimony, quite naturally met young George Washington at that time. After about a year, Lord Fairfax returned to England to settle up his affairs there, appointing Mr. William Fairfax, his cousin, his agent during his absence.

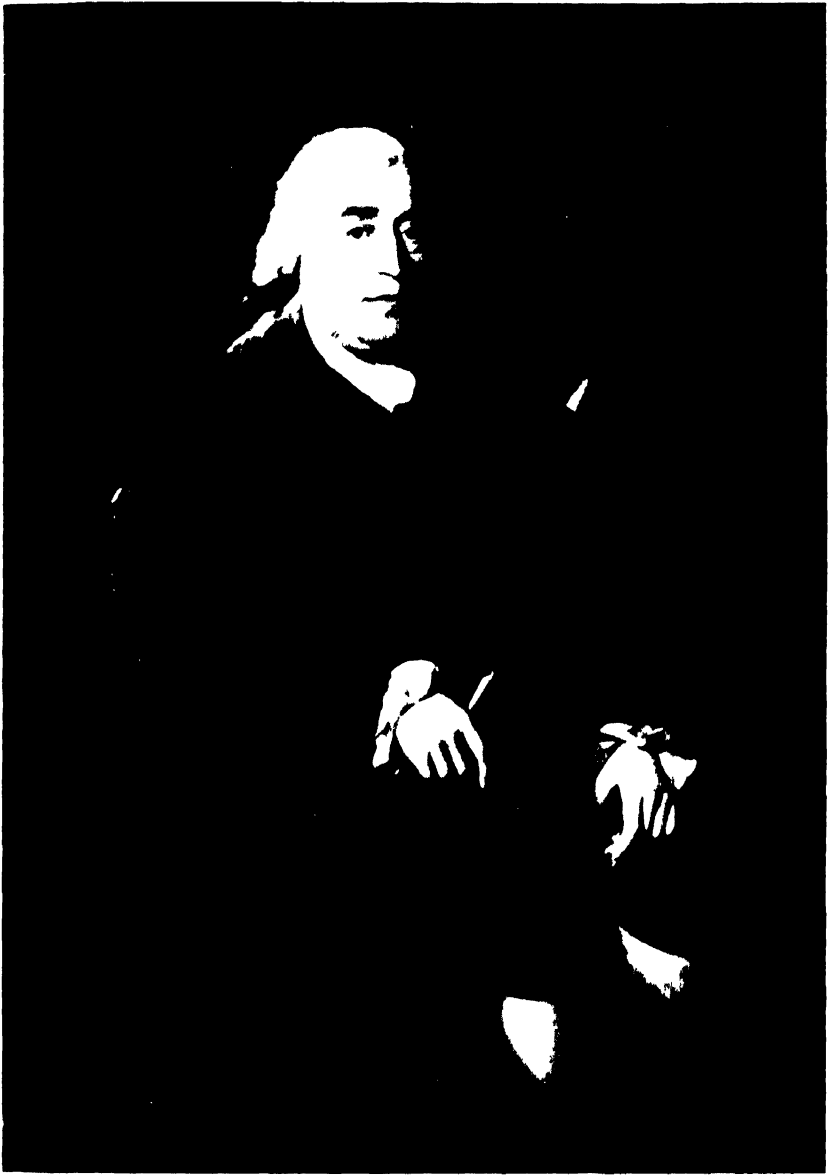
His affairs in England were evidently more complicated than he had expected; but in 1748, we find a letter to George Fairfax, his cousin's eldest son, of whom he had become very fond, in which he speaks of his proposed return. It is dated from Leeds Castle, April 6th, and runs as follows:—

“DEAR GEORGE,—I have sent you, by Captain Cooling, of the *Elizabeth*, two dogs and one bitch, of Sir Edward Filmore's, which he promised you. I desire you will be very careful of them, and get into the breed ;—if you have any other good hounds, they will make a good cross and mend the breeds. If there is any charge attending them, I have wrote your father to satisfy Captain Cooling. I do not yet hear of any convoy appointed for Virginia, but I hope soon to know of one being named that I may soon have the pleasure of seeing my friends in the Northern Neck. I hope likewise to have the pleasure of acquainting you of something to your advantage. The Major desires his compliments and reminds you of his turkeys. I have nothing more to add at the present time but that I remain,

“Yours,

“FAIRFAX.”

Presently—within the year—Lord Fairfax returned to



LORD THOMAS FAIRFAX

*From a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds now in the possession of the Alexandria-Washington
Lodge of Alexandria, Virginia*

Virginia and for a time he stayed at the home which his cousin had built for himself on the Potomac River, where he passed his days in fox-hunting and in the management of the broad acres which had come to him by inheritance. He was an austere, eccentric bachelor—a man of taste and culture—a man of the world, who had acquired, for all his reserve, that easy touch and intimate mastery in dealing with men which comes of long practice. Rumour has it that he had been crossed in love. Be that as it may, he brought with him to Virginia the fresh vigour of a man who has spent the best years of his life in the open air and not at the gambling table. The loss of his parental estates in Yorkshire must have been a blow to him, but he came to America, not to get away from the world of fashion in London and bury himself in the wilderness, but rather to open up, settle and cultivate the vast tracts of beautiful land which he had inherited in Virginia.

That eminent American historian, Woodrow Wilson, has drawn a very graphic picture of life in Virginia at that time in his biography of George Washington, published fifty years ago, a picture which bears so strongly on my story that I wish I might quote it in its entirety. But that is impossible, and I can only attempt to give the substance of his description.

The English colonies in America lay very tranquil in those days, he tells us. The difficulties and anxieties of first settlement were over, and there was no longer any thought that the men who had journeyed across the broad Atlantic in search of a new home on the great continent, which had lain remote and undiscovered for so many years, would draw back or falter in what they had undertaken. Virginia, the oldest of the Colonies, was least to be distinguished by any private character of her own, from the rural communities of England herself. Englishmen in Virginia were in no way radically different from Englishmen in England, except that they were provincials and frontiersmen. They had

their own tasks and ways of life; but their tastes and temperament, despite the change of environment, they had in common with Englishmen at home. They had even kept the English character *as they had received it*, against the touch of time and social revolution, until Virginians seemed like older Englishmen. For, though England had changed, Virginia had not. Landed estates spread themselves with an ample acreage, along the banks of the rivers which threaded the virgin woodland, and the planter drew about him a body of dependants who knew no other master. Some of them were his slaves, bound to him in perpetual subjection; others his tenants, who looked upon him as a sort of patron. In Maryland the law often dubbed the great property a "Manor"—in fact several of these properties are called by that same name even to-day. Each had its separate court baron and private jurisdiction. Virginian gentlemen enjoyed independence and authority without need of formal title.

There was but one centre of social life in Virginia: at Williamsburg, the village capital, where the Governor had his "palace," where stood the colonial college, where there were taverns, and where there was much gay company and not a few formal ceremonial gatherings in the season. There was no great mart to which all the trade of the colony was drawn. Ships came and went upon each broad river, as upon a highway, taking and discharging freight at the private wharves of the several plantations. Every planter was his own merchant, shipping his tobacco to England and importing thence in return his clothes, his tools, his household fittings, his knowledge of the London fashions, and of the game of politics at home. He might have good plate upon his sideboard, palatable old wine in the cellar of his own square, broad-gabled house, with its airy hall and homelike living-rooms, from the walls of which looked down the portraits of the stately men and women from whom he took his blood and breeding. But there was little luxury in his

life. Plain comfort and homely abundance sufficed him. He was a gentleman, owned all he saw around him, exercised authority, and enjoyed consideration throughout the colony; but he was no prince. He lived always in the style of a provincial and a gentleman commoner, as his neighbours and friends did.

It was the same in church as in the state. The great landowners were all-powerful in the vestries of their own parishes, where many neighbourhood interests were passed upon—the care of the poor, the survey of estates, the maintenance of the church and its minister. Sometimes the church building was itself the gift of the largest landowner of the parish; the planters were always the chief ratepayers. They enjoyed in their own neighbourhood a sort of feudal pre-eminence, and the men about them easily returned to that older order of English life in which the chief proprietor of the countryside claimed, as a matter of course, the homage of his neighbours. It was this ascendancy of the great landed proprietors which gave to Virginia something of the same air and turn of opinion that existed in England, with its veritable aristocracy, its lordly country gentlemen, and its ancient distinctions of class and manners. There was, after all, no real isolation for any man in Virginia, although he lived so much apart and was a sort of lord within his own rustic barony. Bridle-paths everywhere threaded the forests, and it was no great matter to ride from house to house among one's neighbours. Men did not thrive by staying within doors and were often abroad for the sheer pleasure of bestriding a good horse behind a pack of hounds, which more often than not was recruited—as were the trencher-fed packs of old England—from the kennels of their neighbours.

It was not a life that bred students. Not much systematic education was possible, where the population was so dispersed. A few country schools undertook what was absolutely necessary, and gave instruction in such practical

branches as every man must know something of who was to take part in the management of private or public business. For the rest, those who could afford it went overseas to the universities, or to Williamsburg, where at last the colony had its own college of William and Mary. More youths went from the Northern Neck to England for their education than from any other part of Virginia, but no one in Virginia thought that "becoming a mere scholar" was "a desirable education for a gentleman." He ought to "become acquainted with men and things rather than books," wrote Robert Beverley, whose *History and Present State of Virginia* was published in London in 1705. He did not write because he had the ambition to be an author but because he loved Virginia, and because he wished to give such an account of her affairs as would justify his pride in her. He thought himself justified in loving a country where "plantations, orchards, and gardens, constantly afford fragrant and delightful walks. In their woods and fields they have an unknown variety of vegetables and other rarities of nature to discover and observe. They have hunting, fishing, and fowling, with which they entertain themselves in a thousand ways. Here is the most good nature and hospitality practised in the world, both towards friends and strangers; but the worst of it is, this generosity is attended, now and then, with a little too much intemperance. The neighbourhood is at much the same distance as in the country in England, but with this advantage, that all the better sort of people have been abroad and seen the world, by which means they are free from that stiffness and formality which discover more civility than kindness. And besides, the goodness of the roads and the fairness of the weather bring people oftener together."

No wonder that Lord Fairfax felt drawn to this happy land, where the life was so like the England he remembered in his younger days. No wonder that he sought to improve his own vast holdings in that hospitable country where—

says Beverley—"a stranger had no more to do but to inquire upon the road where any gentleman or good house-keeper lived, and there he might depend upon being received with hospitality." What more natural than that he should be attracted to the young Major, Lawrence Washington, whom his neighbours had hastened to make their Representative in the House of Burgesses, and his own cousin of the house of Fairfax, who was President of the King's Council.

George Washington, at that time a lad of sixteen, had left his formal school and joined his half-brother, Lawrence, at Mount Vernon, in order to seek counsel and companionship there. Lawrence had conceived a strong affection for his younger brother, who was to him more like his son, for there was great disparity in their ages, and young Washington was quick to avail himself of the chance to mix with the men who gathered for the hunting at Mount Vernon, or at the neighbouring estate of Mr. Fairfax. Every lad learned to ride in those days—to ride anything that he was given, regardless of training, gait, or temper—in a country where no one went afoot, and George Washington quickly became a finished horseman. Young men and old can be companions in arms, in sport, in woodcraft, and in the hunting field, and it was not long before Washington had become fast friends with the old expatriated British sportsman who lived so near him. In one of his early diaries—1747—we find the following entry, descriptive of Lord Fairfax: "At this time he was fifty-nine years old. Although a heavy man, he was a fine horseman and, as I was never tired of the saddle, we were much engaged in the hunting of wild foxes."

He first met Lord Fairfax while he was surveying his brother's land at Mount Vernon, and the old nobleman admired the energy which the boy put into both work and play. "It may very well be," says Owen Wister, "that what endeared the young surveyor to his Lordship was the

gallant manner in which he took his fences—‘let your recreation be Manfull, not Sinfull,’ says Rule 109 in Washington’s copy-book. And so, Washington’s pluck and his good modest manner brought Fairfax to make him his frequent companion in hunting and his guest at Belvoir, where there were well-bred women and Addison’s *Essays*, and all was of a piece of the same sound, mellow civilisation. In this good society the boy of sixteen grew steadily into a man of the world (though of his bashfulness he never became complete master, and we shall see this later upon several occasions), and he also learned in farming and agriculture those standards of English thoroughness which he endeavoured to maintain later in the midst of the American slackness that prevailed then, as it prevails to-day. What he learned among the ladies who lived or visited at Belvoir came as naturally to him and was retained as tenaciously by his instinct and his memory as the outdoor knowledge, the planting, harvesting, fencing, gates, hinges, and all else with which Lord Fairfax’s talk must have abounded, while the older man and the young rode leisurely across country together after a hunt. Fairfax was bound to comment upon the slovenly American farming that they passed by at such times.

“Surely his Lordship gave the boy a mount now and then! Surely he sometimes said: ‘There’s a young horse at Belvoir you had better try and see if he will do for the ladies.’ It is agreeable to think of those huntings; of the hounds scudding over Virginia’s pleasant hills; and hard behind them, the ruddy-faced nobleman, with George not quite abreast of him (Rule 57: ‘In walking . . . with . . . a man of Great quality, walk not with him cheek by jowl, but somewhat behind him’)—George therefore keeping himself a respectful second, controlling the sinful desires of the spirit to be first—and some love verses forgotten in his pocket. Then in the field corners, by the edges of the coverts, stopping to bite a sandwich, surely his Lordship

would bid the boy come up for a pull at his own flask, and surely the boy, after a proper hesitation, would take the pull! (Rule 40: 'Strive not with your superiors in argument.') And so, the two ride home, talking together after the hunt; perhaps the boy stops to sup at Belvoir with Lord Fairfax, or perhaps the hunt has taken them to the other side of the country, and Lord Fairfax sups and sleeps at Mount Vernon; and as he and his host, Lawrence Washington, light their bedroom candles, and part for the night, his Lordship says: 'Your brother's a fine lad, Mr. Washington. We must do something for him, Sir.' And the eyes of the elder brother fill with tenderness and pride at the remark of Lord Fairfax, for he knows it to be true. In the character of the boy he had brought from Fredericksburg, to give a start in life if he could, he had soon discerned a jewel of great price, and his hopes and his love were set upon him."

Fairfax did do something for him. He knew the athletic boy to be a fearless woodsman, with that odd calm judgment looking forth from his steady grey eyes; and he perceived how seriously he undertook anything which he set himself to do, and did not doubt that he could run his line through the wilderness as well as any other man, despite his youth. At any rate he commissioned him to undertake the task of surveying the great tract of which he was possessed, and he was not disappointed with the results. The day when Washington first set out on his new undertaking is marked in his Diary: "Friday March 11, 1747-8, began my Journey in company with George Fairfax, Esqr.; we travell'd this day 40 miles to Mr. George Newels, in Prince William County." Within a month he was back again with maps and figures which showed his Lordship very clearly what lands he had upon the Shenandoah and the upper waters of the Potomac.

We have seen that fox-hunting was his chief recreation—Burnaby puts it even stronger, and says that "he was passionately fond of the sport"—so perhaps it is not to be

wondered at that "at length, the land about Belvoir not answering his expectations and the foxes becoming less numerous, he determined to remove to a fine tract of land on the western side of the Blue Ridge, or Appalachian Mountains, in Frederick County, about eighty miles from Belvoir, where he built a small neat house which he called Greenway Court."

It had been his idea to build a great Manor House, but as the years wore on he abandoned that idea, and though the plans were drawn, it was never begun, and the plain comforts of his woodland habitation becoming increasingly pleasant and familiar, he lived for the remainder of his life in the style of a gentleman farmer—or, I should rather have said, of an English county gentleman. He kept many servants, white and black, several hunters, a plain but plentiful table, entirely in the English fashion, and his mansion was the mansion of hospitality.

It would be interesting to know what type of hounds were those sent to America by Lord Fairfax to "mend the breeds" then being used in Virginia by his cousin George, to whom he wrote from Leeds Castle. Sir Walter Gilbey, in his book, *Hounds in Old Days*, tells us that there were two sorts of hounds in England used for hunting the smaller kinds of game. Our ancestors apparently held what they called "cunning hunting" the true method of pursuing any game, and Gervaise Markham (1611) described the hounds required for "cunning hunting" in the following fashion:—

"You shall breed your dogs from the slowest and largest of the Northern Hounds, and the swiftest and slenderest of the West Country Hounds, being, both male and female, approved to be staunch, fair and even in running, of perfect fine scent, and not given to lie off or look for advantages." The resulting cross between the two was "neither so slow that you will waste many days without fruit of your labour, nor so unnimble that you shall need men to help them over every hedge, as I have many times seen to my much wonder.

These cross-bred hounds then, being both strong and active, will hold you in continual delight and exercise; for these middle-sized dogs are neither so swift that they will far outrun the scent or let it grow cold by their own laziness, but being ever and anon upon it, bring the chase to such a narrow exigent (press the quarry so closely) that the poor beast shall be forced to try all the skill, nature or strength hath lent it to preserve life; and the hounds, on the other hand, all their pains and the Huntsman's cunning to undo (unravel) intricate doubles, skips, squats and windings with which they shall be perplexed. In this mediocrity of hunting shall your eye, if the covert be not too extreme thick, take a perfect view of all the art and cunning in every passage; so that I conclude the middle-sized hound of good strength, sound mouth and reasonable speed, which will make a horse gallop fast and not run, is the best for true art and use of hunting."

It must be remembered that many hounds, in the days when this was written, were used for hare-hunting as well as fox-hunting. In fact, the former quarry was considered the better of the two, and the latter more as vermin, in many parts of England. Beckford, who was born in 1740, had harriers before he renounced hare- for fox-hunting, and his hounds were undoubtedly a cross between the large, slow-hunting harrier, and the little fox beagle—"little" by comparison with the slow Southern Hound, and not to be confused with the beagle of to-day.

Richard Blome published his work, *The Gentleman's Recreation*, in 1686, and it may be interesting to note that, in his description of the various sorts of hunting, fox-hunting takes a very modest place. He speaks of two sorts of fox-hunting: fox-hunting underground, which was practised more or less in the way that badger-digging is to-day, and fox-hunting "above ground," which he describes as follows:—

"To this purpose you must draw with your Hounds about

Groves, Thickets, and Bushes, near Villages : for a *Fox* will lurk in such places, to prey on young Pigs and Pullett.

"But it will be necessary to stop up his earths, if you can find them, the night before you intend to hunt; and the best time will be about midnight, for then the *Fox* goeth out to seek his Prey. You may stop his Holes by laying two white sticks across before them, which will make him imagine it is some Gin or Trap laid for him: or else you may stop them up close with black Thorns and Earth together.

"The best hunting a *Fox* above-ground, is in *January*, *February*, and *March*, for then you shall best see your Hounds hunting, and best find his Earthing; besides at those times the *Fox's* Skin is best in season.

"Again, the Hounds best hunt the *Fox* in the coldest weather, because he leaveth a very strong scent behind him; yet in cold weather it chills fastest.

"At first only cast off your sure Finders, and as the Drag mends, so adde more as you dare trust them.

"Shun casting off too many Hounds at once, because Woods and Coverts are full of sundry Chases, and so you may engage them in too many at one time.

"Let such as you cast off at first be old Staunch Hounds, which are sure; and if you hear such a Hound call on merrily, you may cast off some other to him; and when they run it on the full cry, cast off the rest; and thus you shall compleat your pastime.

"The words of comfort are the same which are used in the other chases, attended with the same Hallowings and other ceremonies. Let the Hounds kill the *Fox* themselves and worry and hare him as much as they please: Many *Hounds* will eat him with eagerness.

"When he is dead, hang him at the end of a pike-staff, and Hallow in all your Hounds to bay him; but reward them not with anything belonging to the *Fox*; for it is not good, neither will they eat it."

Oddly enough, I find the above quotation repeated, almost verbatim, in *The Sportsman's Dictionary*, printed for Fielding & Walker, of 20 Pater-Noster-Row MDCCLXXVIII., with one or two slight additions.

Blome approves Northern Hounds for fox-hunting, on the ground that "the fox will exercise them better and longer," and further states that "the Northern Beagle and Southern hound make a good strain for this sport." It produces, he says, "a middle sort of dog which partakes of both their qualities as to strength and swiftness in a reasonable proportion; they are excellent in mixed country; they will (go) through thick and thin, neither (do they) need your help over hedges as you are forced to do by others."

Though the author does not definitely say so, we may fairly assume that he had the cross-breed in mind when he wrote, with regard to digging a fox, that "it should be thrown to the pack to blood and encourage them." There can be little doubt that this "middle sort of dog" was common at this period. Sir Walter Gilbey calls attention to the fact that a stallion hound named *Luther*, sent in the year 1733 by Mr. John Bright, Master of the Badsworth, to the Duke of Richmond, brought to that nobleman's kennel the best blood of several packs which hunted both the northern and southern areas of England, as was shown by his pedigree which is given in the *Records of the Old Charlton Hunt*, published by the Earl of March in 1910.

It may well be that Lord Thomas Fairfax—who, after all, came from the Northern part of England—was fully aware of the qualities of the Northern Beagles, and in sending hounds to his cousin in Virginia and suggesting that they would make a good cross with any which he might have possessed at that time, was merely following the same lines as those which had been so successful at home. Be that as it may, there are, as far as I can ascertain, no *contemporary* pictures of the foxhounds used in America

in those days, the earliest one of which I know being an engraving in that little-known book, *Memoirs of the Gloucester Fox Hunting Club*, near Philadelphia, written by W. Milnor, Jun., and published by one Judah Dobson in 1830. The hounds depicted in this volume strongly resemble in conformation the "Northern Beagles" which were shown in paintings of foxhounds used in England at the time of which we are writing, and it seems to me a fair supposition that the hounds which Fairfax hunted must have been of somewhat similar conformation.

Washington's diaries tell us that, in 1751, the whole course of his life was changed by the illness of his brother. Lawrence Washington had never been robust, and since neither a trip to England, nor the waters of the Warm Springs, near his home, seemed to bring any great recuperation, his physician ordered him to go to the Bahamas for the winter. George, whom he so loved and trusted, went with him to nurse and cheer him, but even the gentle sea air of the Islands did him no good, and the next summer he came back to die in his prime at 34. George found himself named Executor in his brother's Will, and found, too, that his death had changed everything for him; for he had also been named Residuary Legatee of the estate of Mount Vernon, which eventually became his home.

"It is no great strain of metaphore to say," writes Owen Wister, "that Washington had now his first chance to sit down since the days when he had pored over his school copy-book; in very truth it made a sort of pause, a breath-taking, between the backwoods and the Revolution, and he loved it best of all. 'I am now,' he wrote, 'I believe fixed at this seat with an agreeable Consort for Life. And hope to find more happiness in retirement than I ever experienced amidst a wide and bustling world.' That phrase about his hoping to find more happiness in retirement than in a wide and bustling world was not an elegant moral sentiment written because it was then the heyday of elegant moral

sentiments in epistolary prose. His letters certainly show this prevailing fashion of the times, but their sentences generally bear very directly on some point of vital public or private necessity. He loved Mount Vernon; to be there with his garden, and his crops, and his animals, was his deepest heart's desire, and we do not need his word for it."

Although busy with the care and management of the acres which he had inherited as well as those which came to him after his marriage to Martha Custis, in January, 1759, Washington found time for sport with horse and hound in that part of the country in which he had hunted when a boy. Fox-hunting was at its best during the frosty days of Christmas-time and early winter, when the year was young and the gentlemen of the country gathered at Belvoir or Mount Vernon, where Lord Fairfax often brought his hounds for a month's visit with the boy—for Washington was scarcely more than a boy—whose first experience in the hunting field had been with him ten years before.

Anyone who doubts Washington's great love of fox-hunting has only to study the accounts given by contemporary writers of his efforts to improve his pack and his entire hunting establishment, between his marriage, in 1759, and the outbreak of the American Revolution, some fifteen years later. His diary during that period is filled with entries which relate not only to actual happenings in the field behind the pack which he was intent on breeding, but also of his breeding operations themselves, and of his kennel and stable management. He took as much pains with the mating of his own bitches to suitable outside stallion hounds from his neighbours' kennels as he did with the cultivation of the land which he had inherited. Morning and evening he visited his kennels and stables, overseeing personally the carrying out of the orders which he had given to his Huntsman and Stud Groom, and scarcely a day went by during the hunting season which did not find him out—either with his own pack or with the hounds of

one of his neighbours—for there were several privately-owned packs in the vicinity. If one may judge from contemporary writers, Washington's pack was the best in the neighbourhood, and Mount Vernon had many sporting guests from Maryland—and even from farther off. Their visits were not of days, but of weeks; and we may be very sure that they were entertained in the good old style of Virginia's hospitality.

Washington himself was a finished horseman, and since his stable was of the best, he was always close up to his hounds, although he did not hunt them himself. In those days, scarlet coats seem not to have been worn in America. At any rate, Washington's hunting costume is described as consisting of a blue coat, similar in cut and colour, probably, to the one in which King George III. of England is pictured in the well-known print by Dubourg, showing His Majesty hunting in Windsor Park. A scarlet waistcoat and the buff buckskin breeches always worn in those days—both in England and America—completed the costume; save for the velvet hunting cap generally worn by all Masters at that time. He must have been in his prime in those days and it must have needed a stout horse to carry him; for, although he was a spare man—always in perfect physical condition—he was six feet three in height, and must have weighed close to fourteen stone.

The first mention that I find of fox-hunting in Washington's diaries is in 1768: "January 1st—Fox hunt'g in my own Neck (the Neck Plantation was the name applied for a time to the land immediately above Little Hunting Creek) with Mr. Robt. Alexander and Mr. Colvill. Caught nothing. Captn. Posey with us."

"January 8th—Hunting again in the same comp'y. Started a fox and ran him 4 hours—took the hounds off at night." The diary shows that about this time there was a hard frost and a bit of snow, and it seems the weather was impossible for hunting, for, on January 16th, we find an

entry which says: "At home all day at Cards—snowing;" and a few days later we find an entry which tells us that Washington took advantage of the river's freezing to survey his shore lines. However, the weather must have moderated, for there are entries all through the remainder of January, and sport seems to have been pretty good—though they "caught" nothing. They evidently put in some spare time getting the coverts into shape, for, on the 23rd, we find an entry which says: "Rid up to Muddy Hole and directed paths to be cut for Fox Hunting."

February was a good month for sport. On the 12th we find an entry: "Fox Hunting with Colonel Fairfax, Capn. McCarty, Mr. Chichester, Posey, Ellzey and Manley, who dined here, with Mrs. Fairfax and Miss Nicholas—caught two foxes." The next day they "caught two more foxes," but "none dined at Mt. Vernon." On the 18th the Colonel went "a ducking between breakfast and dinner," and on the 20th hunting again with successful results. On the 23rd "I went fox-hunting with Capn' Posey. Caught a fox we suppose, but it being dark we could not find it." On the 24th and 25th "Ducking" was the order of the day, and the Colonel "killed 2 Mallards and 5 Bald-faces," by which, I suppose, he means bald-pate widgeon. On the following day he shot a "Sprig-tail" and a "Teal." Duck were fairly plentiful.

Under observations for March there are several items regarding the breeding of his pack, in which he seems to have taken a great deal of interest; for we find a note that he "sent Chaunter (a Hound bitch) up to Toulston, to go to Mr. Fairfax's dog Forester, or Rockwood; she appearing to be Proud, Forester not being at home, she went to Rockwood." Throughout the month hunting continued steadily and hounds were out some seven times in April. Washington evidently believed in killing a May fox, for, on May 9th, he "Went a Fox Hunting and caught a fox after 35 minutes' chase." He seems to have closed his season

about this time, but he evidently was preparing for the future, for we find notes of various matings which have been recorded earlier.

"The hound bitch Mopsey brought 8 Puppys, distinguished by the following names, viz.: Tartar, Jupiter, Trueman and Tipler (being dogs) and Truelove, June, Dutchess, and Lady, being Bitches—in all eight. The bitch Chaunter brought five Dog Puppies and 3 Bitch Ditto which were named as follows, viz.: Forrester, Sancho, Ringwood, Drunkard, and Sentwell, Singer and Busy."

In January of 1770 Washington had some very good sport, together with several guests who were stopping with him at Mount Vernon. On the 8th we find this entry: "Went a hunting with Mr. Alexander, J. P. Custis, and Lt. (Lund) Washington. Killed a fox (a dog one) after 3 hours' chase. Mr. Alexander went away and Thurston came in afterward in the afternoon."

The company had a sporting day or two, for on January 10th: "I went a hunting in the Neck, and visited the Plantn. there. Found and killed a bitch fox after treeing it 3 times and chasing it abt. 3 hours." The next day they killed again, and on the 23rd we find: "Went a hunting after breakfast and found a fox in Muddy Hole and killed her (it being a bitch) after a chace of better than 2 hours and after treeing her twice, the last of which times she fell dead out of the tree after being there in sevl. minutes apparently well."

Hunting seems to have gone on steadily through the years up to February of 1775, and then cheek-by-jowl with the sporting notes another of a different character. On February 18th he writes: "Went up to Alexandria (Virginia) to meet and exercise the Independent Camp." One more day's hunting we get—on March 4th—a "blank day," and then his diaries become a concise Military Journal, which, interesting as it is, has nothing to do with this story.

After the peace of 1783, the hunting establishment,

which had gone down during the war, was renewed and augmented by the arrival of a pack of French Hounds sent out to Washington by the Marquis de Lafayette, and, in looking over some correspondence between the two sportsmen, I find the following—under date of July 25th, 1785:

“I am much obliged to you, my dear Marquis, for your attention to the hounds and not less sorry that you should have met with the smallest difficulty, or experienced the least trouble in obtaining them. I was in no way anxious about these, consequently should have felt no regret, or sustained no loss if you had not succeeded in your application.”

I think there was some trouble about their importation, but eventually they arrived safely; for, on September 1st, he writes to the Marquis: “The hounds which you were so obliging as to send me arrived safe, and are of promising appearance. To Monsieur le Comte Doilliamson (if I miscall him your handwriting is to blame, and in honour you are bound to rectify the error) and in an especial manner to his fair Comtesse my thanks are due for this favour.” (The Comtesse had added her favourite dog to the small pack, and Washington’s letter to the Comte, which he enclosed to Lafayette, assured the Comtesse that he would take especial care of this dog.)

“These *chiens de chasse*,” says a young relative, Washington Parke Custis, in describing them, “were of very great size:—

“ . . . bred out of the Spartan kind,
So flew’d, so sanded, and their heads are hung
With ears that sweep away the morning dew;
Dewlapp’d like Thessalian bulls,
Matched in mouth like bells . . . ”

the bells of Moscow and great “Tom” of Lincoln, we should say, and from their strength were fitted not only to

pull down the stately stag, but in combat to encounter the wolf or boar, or even to grapple with the lordly lion. These hounds, from their fierce disposition, were generally kept confined; and woe to the stranger who might be passing their kennel after nightfall should the gates be unclosed. His fate would be melancholy, unless he could climb some friendly tree, or the voice or the whip of the Huntsman came "speedily to the rescue." The Huntsman always presided at their meals, and it was only by the liberal application of the whip-thong that anything like order could be preserved among these savages of the chase.

"Of these French Hounds there was one named 'Vulcan,' and we bear him the better in reminiscence, from having often bestrode his back in the days of juvenility. It happened that, upon a large company sitting down to dinner at Mount Vernon, the lady of the mansion discovered that the ham, the pride of every Virginia housewife's table, was missing from its accustomed post of honour. Upon questioning Frank, the butler, this portly and at the same time most polite and accomplished of all butlers, observed that a ham, yes a very fine ham, had been prepared, nay, dished, agreeably to the Madam's orders; but lo and behold, who should come into the kitchen while the savoury ham was smoking in its dish, but old 'Vulcan,' the hound, and without more ado fastened his fangs into it, and although they, of the kitchen, had stood bravely to such arms as they could get, and had fought the old spoiler desperately, yet 'Vulcan' had finally triumphed and borne off the prize—aye, cleanly under the keeper's nose.' The lady by no means relished the loss of a dish which formed the pride of her table, and uttered some remarks by no means favourable to old 'Vulcan,' or, indeed, to dogs in general; while the Chief, having heard the story, communicated it to his guests, and with them laughed heartily at the exploit of the 'stag hound.' "

It was not until November that we find a record of the

French Hounds in the field, but on November 29th, the diary states: "Went out after breakfast with my hounds from France, and two which were lent me by Mr. Mason. Found a fox which was run tolerably well by two of the French bitches and one of Mr. Mason's dogs. The other French Dogs showed little disposition to follow and with the second dog of Mason's, got upon another Fox which was followed slowly and indifferently by some, and not at all by the rest, until the scent became so cold that it cd. not be followed at all."

Scent was apparently very bad for the next week, for, though hounds were out on several days, they could do nothing. On December 12th, however, a goodly party took the field, among them George Augustine Washington, who had acted at one time during the war as Lafayette's aide-de-camp. The diary says: "After an early breakfast we went into the wood back of Muddy Hole Plantation a hunting, and were joined by Mr. Lund Washington and Mr. William Peake. About half after ten o'clock (being first plagued with Dogs running Hogs) we found a fox near Col. Mason's plantation on Little Hunting Creek (west fork), having followed on his Drag for more than a mile; and run him with eight dogs (the other four getting as was supposed after another fox) close and well for an hour. Then the Dogs came to a fault, and to cold hunting until 20 minutes after 12; when being joined again by the missing Dogs they put him up afresh, and in about 50 minutes killed up in an open field of Col. Mason's, every rider and every dog present at the death. Two hounds which were lent, and sent out yesterday by Mr. Chichester, viz. a Dog named Rattler and a Bitch named June, behaved very well. My French Dogs also come on (all except the bitch which raised puppies) running constantly while the scent was hot. Mr. Peake and Lund Washington came home to dinner with us."

This somewhat flowery description of the French Hounds and their activities leads one to believe that, on the

whole, they were not a success, and, indeed, it would seem to me, from reading Colonel Thornton's description of the hounds used at that time in France, that they could hardly be expected either to enter well at a quarry to which they were unused, or to make a successful cross. General Lafayette and Washington were great friends, and it would seem quite a natural thing that the French nobleman might have discussed hunting with the great American General, and have suggested that on his return to France he would like to send some hounds to him as a token of his esteem.

So far as I know, this was the only importation of French Hounds—certainly with the idea of using them for fox-hunting or crossing them with foxhounds—until about 150 years later, when Mr. Charles E. Mather, the Master of The Brandywine, near Philadelphia, U.S.A., imported two couple of French Hounds, with that idea in view. I myself saw them at work in the field, and can testify that the experiment was a failure. But to go back to Washington's day: a contemporary writer has stated that hounds were accustomed to go out three days a week—weather permitting; but this statement is contradicted by the diary, which shows that, when the weather was suitable, hounds were frequently out several days in succession, and, since, in most of the hunts, *grey* foxes were the quarry pursued, it is easy to realise that, as a rule, the runs were of comparatively short duration; since the American grey fox (*Urocyon cinereoargenteus*) is apt not only to run in circles, but also to climb trees when he is hard pressed.

The contemporary account of the hunting lays great stress on Washington's horsemanship and the quality of the animals he bestrode, and I have been lucky enough to find one letter, written to a friend, describing the type of animal he fancied. The letter is dated from Mount Vernon, some years after the close of the Revolution, and reads as follows:

"My dear Sir: My *present* want of a riding horse is great,

—but if I should be called to the field, it will be much greater.

“As I am much out of the way of seeing, or hearing, of such as would answer my purposes—especially in the latter case—and know that you are a good judge of the parts and general symmetry of a horse of figure, You would do me a favour if such a one as hits your own taste should fall in your way to buy him for me.—The cost to be paid on delivery.

“In age, I should not be willing to exceed Seven Years—Eight at most—younger but not under four last Spring would be better. For colour I will not contend, but would prefer a *perfect* white,—a dapple grey—a deep bay—a chestnut—a black, in the order they are mentioned. The size and strength must be equal to my weight, which without saddle may be estimated at 210 lbs. Being long legged, or tall, would be no recommendation, as it adds nothing to strength, but a good deal to the convenience in mounting.

“Under my circumstances, I cannot limit you in sum; but shall add that I never expected to be Master of a *riding* horse that cost more than four hundred dollars.

“As I have no idea that Mr. David Randolph (being on a journey) would have parted with the horse he thought might have suited me, I took but little notice of him; which I have been sorry for since and he is not within reach *now*. I asked him however what such a horse would cost, he answered four hundred dollars—that fine horses were scarce and dear. Remember us in affectionate terms to Mrs. Fitzhugh and the rest of your family, and believe me to be as I sincerely am—always,

“Yours,

“G. WASHINGTON.”

“To WILLM. FITZHUGH, Esq.”

This letter is of interest, as it shows Washington's

preference for grey horses—the hunter most mentioned in the accounts of runs in which he participated at that time is invariably described as a *dark grey gelding* named Blueskin, which seems to have been a most amazing “lepper,” who was always at the tail of the pack no matter how stiff the fences or how long the hunt. Billy Lee, Washington’s Huntsman, was usually mounted on an animal rejoicing in the name of Chinkling, who from his description was of coarser breeding but “sturdy, and of great bone and muscle.” Lee apparently used a curved French horn, which the writer who describes him suggests was out of compliment to the French.

The meets in those days—I am speaking of America only—were at daybreak, the General and his friends breaking their fast by candle-light, and the entire cavalcade having left the kennels before the sun had risen and before the foxes had got to ground. Once the day’s sport was over, the hunting party would return to the nearest mansion house, where “at the well-spread board, and with cheerful glass”—to use the words of a contemporary writer—“the feats of the leading dog, the most gallant horse, or the boldest rider, together with the prowess of the far-famed black fox, were all discussed, while Washington, never permitting even his pleasures to infringe on the order and regularity of his habits, would after a few glasses of Madeira, retire to his bed at nine o’clock.”

The year 1786 saw excellent sport, Washington hunting regularly from Mt. Vernon during the winter, and attending the races at Alexandria. Not only did he go himself, but always considerate of others, he made arrangements for all the people on his plantation to have a holiday at that time, and arranged for their admission and accommodation at the course. Washington’s last hunt with his hounds was in the year 1787. His private affairs and public business required too much of his time to allow him to indulge in field sports, and he very reluctantly gave away his hounds



JONAS CATTELL

JONAS CATLLL

Huntsman to the Gloucester Fox Hunting Club

and gave up the pleasures of the chase. That he still retained his interest in hounds and hunting is, however, evident from the following extract from an entry in his diary made in February, 1789:—

“I went up to the Election of a Representative to Congress from this District. Voted for Richard Bland Lee Esq. Dined at Col. Hooes’ and returned home in the afternoon. On my way home I met George Calvert on his way to Abingdon with the Hounds I had lent him, viz.:—Vulcan and Venus from France, Ragmar. and two other dogs from England, Dutchess and Dixey from Philadelphia, Jupiter and Countess, descended from the French hounds.”

This is the last note that I can find in Washington’s diaries about hounds or hunting, and yet I cannot somehow think that this was the end. He was elected to the Presidency of the United States very shortly after this, and it may well be that he found no time for the relaxation which the chase brought to him. Be that as it may, I always think that the words recorded at the time of his election—dated April 16th—are rather sad:—

“About ten o’clock I bade adieu to Mt. Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity, and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New York in company with Mr. Thomson and Col. Humphreys with the best disposition to render service to my country in obedience to its calls, but with less hope of answering its expectations.”

About the time that Washington’s fox-hunting activities were at last assuming definite shape in the formation of a pack of foxhounds which could be used regularly about Mount Vernon, a number of gentlemen who lived in and about Philadelphia met at the Philadelphia Coffee House, at the south-west corner of Front and Market Streets, with the idea of organising a Club which should have for its object the regular maintenance of a pack of foxhounds. We have seen that, in Virginia, hounds were maintained by

many of the big landed proprietors for their own amusement and that of their friends, and we have seen that, by joining forces with their neighbours—very much after the manner of the “trencher-fed” packs which are maintained in many parts of America even to-day—a sufficient number of hounds could generally be gathered to furnish sport for their owners and for such friends as might turn up.

• It must be remembered, however, that Virginia was still in a far less settled state than that part of Pennsylvania near Philadelphia, and that, whereas the “trencher-fed” system of fox-hunting was an excellent one for the planters of Virginia, it was not suitable for the sportsmen of a growing city where many of them were engaged in business. A number of these men, many of whom afterwards served in the famous “First Troop of Philadelphia City Cavalry,” which was engaged in the memorable campaign of 1776-77, formed themselves at that first meeting into an organisation which agreed “to provide and keep a kennel of foxhounds” to be maintained for the furtherance of the sport of fox-hunting.

Since the resulting organisation must go down in history as the first Fox Hunting Club which was organised in America, it seems to me worth while to give the names of the men who were present:—

Benjamin Chew	John Dickinson	Thomas Lawrence
Moor Furman	Enoch Story	Charles Willing
Levi Hollingsworth	James Wharton	Robert Morris
John White	John Cadwallader	Samuel Morris, Jun.
Anthony Morris, Jun.	Turbot Francis	Zebulon Rudolph
Richard Bache	Isaac Wikoff	Thomas Mifflin
William Parr	Israel Morris, Jun.	Tench Francis
David Rhea	Joseph Wood	David Potts
Samuel Nicholas	Andrew Hamilton	Thomas Willing •

A further meeting was held at the farm of James Massey, the Club's first Huntsman, on December 13th; and at that

meeting, a majority of the above-named gentlemen agreed upon regulations for the first year of the Club's existence. Five managers were appointed, viz.: Tench Francis, Enoch Story, James Wharton, Samuel Morris and Richard Bache, and it was agreed that "there shall be two hunting days in each week, which shall be on Tuesdays and Fridays."

The managers appointed at that time were to attend to "the good government of the house as a tavern" and also to the proper exercising of the hounds. They were also responsible for paying James Massey, the Club's first Huntsman, such sum as they thought necessary for the maintenance of the hounds, as well as his services to the Club. It was further agreed that, at the death of every fox, "one of the Company shall carry about a Cap to collect what the company may please to give the Huntsman."

The managers, or any of them who were present, were empowered to "prevent anyone from crossing the dogs when they are dragging"—in other words, to act as Master, it being further specified that if no manager was present, the Field should select one among them to act in that capacity.

In 1769 the Club prevailed upon Mr. Morris to permit his negro man, Natt, to be enlisted in their service, and he became, as years went on, a free agent; being engaged by the Club at the then munificent wage of Fifty Pounds per annum, to which was added a house, a horse, and the guarantee of an assistant to be supplied by the Club. In 1774 the members of the Club adopted a "hunting uniform" (very different, it appears, from the red coats of the followers of hounds near the Quaker City to-day; but bearing a strong resemblance to the uniform worn by the members of some of the Hunt Clubs around Philadelphia—notably the Radnor and the Brandywine—as late as 1915). It consisted of "a dark brown cloth coatee, with lapelled dragoon pockets, white buttons and frock sleeves, buff waistcoat and breeches, and a black velvet cap."

In the year 1775—apparently the heyday of the Club's prosperity—the members were in possession of a really nice pack of hounds—sixteen couples, so their records tell us—but the Revolutionary War, which of course superseded all affairs of the chase, found them in financial straits; and when the President, Mr. Morris, produced his accounts—in October of 1780—it was found that there was a balance due him of £3,553 15s. 9½d., which was paid off by collecting the amount from nineteen members of the Club. During hostilities it had been impossible to maintain hunting at anything like the old standard, though during the time of the British occupation of the city, hounds were occasionally hunted by British officers. But once the war was over and peace firmly established, the old Club quickly gathered again, and Samuel Morris, Jun., who had been in command of the First Troop of Philadelphia City Cavalry, was chosen President—a post which he continued to hold until his death in the year 1812.

One W. Milnor, Jun., whose name appears among the leading members of the organisation—which had taken on the title of *The Gloucester Fox Hunting Club* early in the Nineteenth Century—has written its memoirs, which were published by Judah Dobson in 1830. From the account given therein of the activities of the Club, one gathers that a certain Captain Charles Ross, who must have been a Huntsman of considerable ability, assumed the mastership and management of the pack, which consisted at that time of hounds which had been carefully bred from the best imported stock—at least, that is what we are told. Mr. Milnor states that, in 1818, at the time of Captain Ross's death, General Robert Wharton, who at that time was President of the Club, resolved on its dissolution; thus ending the life of an organisation which undoubtedly was the progenitor of many of the Hunt Clubs which now flourish about the Quaker City, which may, I think, claim the right of being called the "Melton of America."

It was during Captain Ross's régime that the headquarters of the Club were removed to kennels on the farm of the Widow Heston, at Glassborough, New Jersey, some twenty miles distant from Philadelphia. At that time the pack was in charge of one Jonas Cattell, who had come into the service of the Club in 1796. Cattell must have been a queer individual, the very opposite of a smart British Hunt servant; but for the work he had to do he appears to have been excellent. He is described as an "extraordinary man"—over six feet in height, athletic in form and figure, and endowed with uncommon strength and activity. He followed hounds on foot, and, in his younger days, was altogether tireless—or, at least, apparently never fatigued, when riders, horses, and even hounds, were jaded. To be sure, he did not cover as great distances, because his accurate knowledge of the run of foxes and the country enabled him to shorten the circuitous route which horsemen had to follow. In the chase, if hounds were at fault and ceased their music for a while, the horn sounded as a directing guide to him, and in a few moments he was sure to make his appearance and assist them to recover the line. He must have been what one might call a "natural" Huntsman. A good specimen of his patient and persevering disposition is given in the description of a hunt which took place in 1816, a few years before the unfortunate dissolution of the Club.

An old red fox—note the fact that *red* foxes were hunted about Philadelphia as well as grey ones—was started from covert, and led his pursuers such a chase that, toward the latter part of the afternoon, it was decided by the Master to call off the pack and give the pilot best. Disappointed and low-spirited, they took up the line of march and reached The Gloucester Inn long after dark, with only a portion of the pack. Early the next morning two of the missing hounds arrived at the kennels, and around the neck of one of them was the brush of the hunted fox. Jonas turned up later in the day and told his story. He and the two leading hounds had

stuck to the chase when the others were called off, and, there being a full moon, he was able to keep the hounds in sight and was present when they killed, close to midnight.

I have spoken of his equipment for the chase as being markedly different from that of any English Huntsman, and when one remembers that he hunted hounds on foot, this is quite natural. Let me quote the word-picture as drawn by the author of *The History of the Gloucester Fox Hunting Club*. "His equipment was extraordinary. A red flannel shirt, a coarse suit of homespun domestic, over which was thrown a dowlass hunting shirt; on his bushy head a woollen cap, a pair of waterproof coarse shoes, or fisherman's boots, with canvas leggings or overalls secured above the hips, as a protection against bushes and briars."

Cattell was prejudiced against horses, and perhaps the reason can be found in the fact that, on the one occasion when he attempted to follow his beloved hounds on horseback, the poor animal which he bestrode became mired when his rider attempted to follow hounds across a swamp in his accustomed way. Disgusted, Jonas dismounted, and leaving him to extricate himself as best he could, continued the chase on foot, being with hounds when they ran into and killed their fox, some two hours afterwards. When asked where his horse was, Jonas refused to tell, and, since the unfortunate animal which had been caught by some sportsmen and brought to the kennels held his silence, what took place always remained a mystery.

CHAPTER TWO

A DUKE OF RICHMOND FOUNDS A PACK IN SUSSEX AND LORD TANKERVILLE WRITES A SET OF RULES

THERE HAS been a good deal of discussion—published and otherwise—as to the earliest regular pack of foxhounds maintained in England. In a letter printed in *The Quarterly Review*, in 1832, Lord Arundel, writing to Mr. Apperley (“Nimrod”) says: “A pack of foxhounds was kept by my ancestor, Lord Arundel, between the years 1690 and 1700; as I have memoranda to prove.”

Mr. Thomas Boothby is also a claimant for the honour of having kept the first regular pack of foxhounds, and it is known that he hunted in Leicestershire somewhere about 1700, though there are few details of the style or extent of his performances. One Thomas Fownes, whose coat of arms can be seen to-day on the plaster ceiling of Peter Beckford’s old dining-room at Stepleton Iwerne, Dorset, is also credited with having maintained a pack of hounds which were entered solely to fox; but, inasmuch as that great student of foxhound breeding, the late Earl Bathurst, says in his book, *The Charlton and Raby Hunts*, that the Hound List of Mr. Richard Orlebar is the oldest that he ever saw, as well as the most interesting, I feel that the pack belonging to the Old Charlton Hunt, which was descended in part from those hounds, is perhaps the foundation from which to make a start in my story of British fox-hunting.

Earl Bathurst says: “It is recorded that Richard Orlebar lent 12½ couple to John Biggs, Esqr., in 1716, and that the same gentleman returned him 13 couple in 1718. In September, 1722, he gave 15 couple to the Duke of Grafton, and in 1725, 2 couple to the Earl of Halifax. When reading

this, I never thought that these facts could possibly be of importance, or that there was the least chance of that blood having any connection with hounds of the present day, although it is hinted that these hounds which were given to the Duke of Grafton might be the ancestors of the present Grafton Hounds. But I, knowing how the Duke's Hounds had been disposed of in 1862, and that an entirely new pack of hounds had been bought by Lord Euston and Lord Penrhyn at that time, mostly from Mr. Hill, with drafts from Belvoir, thought it was out of the question that any connection with Mr. Orlebar's hounds could possibly be true.

"It will be seen how, in fact, this came about, and how I can now prove that the blood of Mr. Orlebar's Shifter, 1719, and his Tipler, 1717, can be traced not only to the present Grafton Kennels, but to practically every kennel in England.

"To put it quite shortly, it is in this way. The above-mentioned couple of hounds were among the 15 couple which were given to the Duke of Grafton by Mr. Orlebar in 1722. The Duke was accustomed to take his hounds from Euston to hunt in Kent, Surrey and Sussex, having a kennel at Croydon. As a cousin of the Duke of Richmond and a friend of the Duke of Bolton, both Shifter and Tipler were used in the Charlton kennel by the Duke of Bolton. Then later, the Duke of Richmond became Master of the Charlton Hunt, and some years later, bred a dog called Ringwood, 1741, which was given to Mr. Pelham of Brocklesby. This Ringwood had a strain of both Mr. Orlebar's Shifter and Tipler in his pedigree, and it can be seen in the Brocklesby Hound List that Ringwood sired no less than 16 litters in the years 1746-1747-1748. Every hound in the Brocklesby Kennel has simply dozens of lines back to the Duke of Richmond's Ringwood, 1741, and from there this blood has spread to every kennel in England."

Now, when a man of Earl Bathurst's authority makes



PORTRAIT OF EDWARD ROPER

From the painting by Sir G. Kneller

this sort of statement, it seems to me that in taking the Old Charlton Hunt as one of the foundation stones of fox-hunting in England, I am not going far amiss. Lord March, later the Duke of Richmond, tells in his fascinating book, *Records of the Old Charlton Hunt*, the history of fox-hunting in Sussex, and shows that two hundred years before the formation of The Charlton Hunt, the country around Midhurst, including the Goodwood hills and Forest, was hunted by the Earls of Arundel, who at that time owned most of that district. A hundred years later the Duke of Monmouth came to hunt there, no doubt brought there through his friendship with Lord Grey of Uppark, who was afterwards Monmouth's Second in Command at the battle of Sedgemoor.

Monmouth and Grey each owned a pack of hounds, and one Edward Roper was appointed Master and Manager of both packs. After the Duke of Monmouth's execution, Roper fled to France, but returned after the accession of King William III. Since the name of no other Master is mentioned in the records, I think we can assume that Roper continued as sole Master until 1721, when the 3rd Duke of Bolton joined him. Mr. Roper died in February, 1722, in the hunting field at the age of 84, and the Duke of Bolton continued as sole Master for the next six years. It is told that the old Squire, who for so long had the management of the Charlton pack, which he had brought to such perfection, had ridden with the hounds to the meet at Findon; but, just as they found and were holloaed away, he fell dead—a fitting ending for a great sportsman.

By his death the hounds became the sole property of the Duke of Bolton, and, for a short time, the new Master devoted himself to Charlton and the management of the pack, which had reached a state of perfection. Presently the attractions of an English actress—none other than the well-known Lavinia Fenton, whose success as Polly Peachum in *The Beggar's Opera* made her the toast of London—lured

him away from hunting—(there is a picture by Hogarth showing her in one of the scenes, with the Duke of Bolton in a box)—and in 1729 he resigned and gave the hounds to the 2nd Duke of Richmond, who, assisted by Lord Delawarr, took over the entire management of the pack.

There is in existence a letter from the Duke of Bolton, at Charlton, to the Duke of Richmond in London, at the end of which there is a reference to the expected acceptance by the latter of the Mastership. It is dated December 6th, 1727, and says, in part: “. . . as to our sport wee had very good last Fryday, wee went outt on Monday butt were driven home by the Rain, soe wee hunted yesterday & kill'd a fox yt gave us soe Little Running, yt wee intend to hunt to day if the frost will lett us; I hope you won't alter your Resolution of coming, it is much desir'd by the whole Company, butt most ardently by ye old Gen'll who toast's you every day. Honyword is a Little pleas'd att the oposition to your List, & wee conclude yt Delawar stay's for yt & some more weighty affaire, the Company desir's there service to your Grace, & I beg you'l believe me

“My Dear Lord

“Your Grace's most faithfull

“ & Obedient Humble Srvt.

“BOLTON.”

The following letter from Lord Delawarr to the Duke of Richmond will be of interest as showing the kennel management—as well as hunting activities—at that time:—

“I had this Morning the favour of your Graces Letter, with one inclosed for Jack Ware. He was so ashamed of the condition the Hounds were in, and does obey directions so willingly, when I am with him, and I think does to the best of his capacity, that I own I cannot have the Heart to give him such a Mercurial, I think it is more for your Graces Service Not to depress his Spirits, with a Severe reprimand for the fault he is so Sensible of. The Hounds have done so well with their Physick given in that manner

that I do not doubt but to bring them as fine as Lap dogs into Sussex.

“My last gave you an account of our Sport on Tuesday last. We went out on Thursday, but when we were gone A Mile, found a Violent storm of rain coming on, so return’d and put up the Hounds. Yesterday we went out with all the Old Hounds, and 2 Couple of Young, we took a Drag, and Hunted to him, it was not a Scenting Day, but we still kept it moving, till we got near him, he would have got into A Coney borough, but he chose so small a one that the Hounds pulled him out without Help of any Instruments, it was just such a Days work as I could have desired after their Physick, for the whole was over in two hours, without any rain, and I brought them Home and fed them att their usuall time, so that I do not doubt but they will be in rare trim on Monday. I take very particular Care not to lett the Young Hounds come into the Same Kennel with the Old nor feed with them. The Pack is likely to be well in Blood, to know an Earth, which is what I think very lucky for they us’d frequently to leave A Fox att Ground and never lay att the Earth; I hope we are very secure from that att Present.

“Old Driver died yesterday att three o’Clock; When we lett the Hounds out on Thursday, he went very lame in his shoulders, so I had him put back, and put by himself, he fed as well as any Hound could do on Wednesday; I gave him Milk, and other Meat, when he was put up, he lap’d the Milk, and eat his Meat, and when I came home from Hunting Yesterday I saw him my self, eat his Meat att 12 of the clock, and he died att 3 as I said before. I sent for Harry Woods, and every body agrees it is not madness, for he Swelld very much, he did not Slaver, nor howl, neither would he have Chew’d his meat, three hours before he died had it been Madness, he was twelve years old and no body thought he could have lasted this whole season.

“I am very glad to hear, Your Grace mends so fast, and

hope to Meet you in Sussex, I do propose being with the Hounds att Charlton the 20th, at farthést, if this Country should be too wett, I will move them sooner, for I assure you I shall have no Consideration, in being here longer than is for the Benefitt of your Hounds, for I make no question of perswading my Wife, to go to London.

“Jack Ware told me yesterday (but I hope he is mistaken) that the Copper att Charlton belongs to Tankerville: if so has he not taken it away? that is to be look’d after, for we shall make a bad figure to come and have nothing to boyl our Meat in for the Hounds. Pray remember the Stables and Kennel att Findon.

“By your Mentioning Misaubin, I suppose there is a Happy reconciliation, of which I give your Grace Joy, as I shall of every thing that can any ways contribute to your Diversion being very truly my Dear Duke

“Your Most faithfull

“ & Obedient Servant

“DELAWARR.”

This letter, which is dated October 7th, 1732, from the New Forest, taken in conjunction with that paragraph at the end of the letter which refers to moving the hounds to Charlton, leads me to believe that it was customary for the pack to be hunted in the Forest early in the season—perhaps beginning at cub-hunting time—in order to get them fit before the regular season opened in Sussex.

The hounds evidently were sent to Findon, there being an agreement which had been entered into between the Duke of Richmond and the Earl of Tankerville, touching the hunting of the country, in which it was agreed (Article 6) “that the said pack of foxhounds shall be kept

ffrom October the 15th to November the 15th at Findon.

ffrom November 15th to January 1st at Charlton.

ffrom January 1st to February 1st at Up Park.

ffrom February 1st to March 1st at Charlton.

ffrom March 1st to April 1st at Up Park.

ffrom April 1st to the laying up the Hounds at Lyndhurst.

ffrom the laying up the Hounds to October 15th at Up Park.

“These times of removing the Hounds to be observed unless otherwise agreed to by the Consent of both Parties.”

Evidently hounds and horses were sent from Findon to Charlton in poor condition, for a letter from Lord Delawarr, dated November 30th, 1732, is a reply to a complaint by the Duke of Richmond who had written him from Charlton. He says:—

“MY LORD :

“This is to acknowledge the favour of both your Graces Letters, and I cannot but be very much concerned to find by the first of them, as well as by Mr. Charltons’, that the Hounds are so very low. The Secret of that is hard to unravell, unless you will think, that John Rowell is old and Lazy and will not feed as he can ; and that the other is young and ignorant how to do it. As to what he alledges that they have not flesh enough it may certainly be answer’d, why have they not, who hinders it. They have not been controul’d these five weeks that I know of, unless it is a Greivance to have an account kept of what Oatmeal is deliver’d to them every week, but the quantity is not limited, so that they have taken what they would, only what they have taken is known, And you may See by the Account of the Horseflesh which you have by you, that was used in the Forest, that they were not Sparing, and how their Modesty comes to make them err on the other Side, can proceed from nothing but their not paying those Bills themselves. If the Servants will not cooperate it is impossible for any mortal to have a Pack of Hounds in Order. I own I rather think they seem by the accounts I have

received that they take Pains the other way, for without Skill any Dog will be fat that is not worked hard which is their Case. Unless you will allow that the quantity of Medecines they have taken have quite torn their constitution to Pieces. As to the Poor work they made of Monday's Chase, that I believe may partly proceed from there having been no rain since the Frost, and in that case I never saw the Scent lay, for the Grounds allways carry.

"As to your Graces 2nd Letter which I receiv'd this Day, I am sorry any Horses were purged without your knowledge, and much more so that any should want it besides the two yt are now purging, which I told you att Godalmin were to be purged at Findon, but I suppose the Distemper they had there prevented it. I fancy that may have put them out of Condition. For they were all purg'd before they left Bolderwood, and came as clean and as well from thence as any Horses in the World, as you saw, if you call'd att Charlton as your Grace told me you would. John Bud said he never saw the Horses come in in such order for riding in his life. I have been very impatient to wait on your Grace in Sussex, and I shall come very soon for I only stay to sign some writing as Lord Cowpers Trustee and then shall wait on you. I am, My Dear Lord,

"Your Graces

"Most Faithful and

"Obedient Servant,

"DELAWARE."

"My most humble Service to her Grace."

"As to their being sick with Antimony, it is a Cursed Lye, for they both know they fed well with it, and after it. if you give a Pound amongst the Pack, it will both Vomit and Purge them, wch in some cases is necessary, but 3 or 4 ounces mixt with a pound and half or two pound of Brimstone, will not only open them, if it is mixty as it ought with the meat and not given in Lumps. but why always Physick?"

Lord Delawarr seems to have been more experienced in the management of hounds and horses than the Duke of Richmond; and, without question, he was more engaged in the actual administration of affairs than the latter, who was unable to devote as much time to them as he perhaps would have liked. Apparently he acted for his friend during the latter's absence; always consulting with him when possible; for, in August of 1733, we find him writing to the Duke, giving him a list of the puppies which are at walk, and cautioning him against breeding too many. The letter, which is dated from Hampton Court, runs as follows:—

“MY LORD :

“I have Sent your Grace an exact List of your Pack, and of the Puppys, by it you will perceive that you are strong, and I fear will in another Year. be overstock'd if you breed so many. (But you are now to Consider which Bitches you would have spaired; I know no benefit that will accrue by them unless it is more Hounds to be given to the Huntsman.) I am sure 5 or 6 Bitches will breed as many Hounds as any body can want. I am in great Hopes You will do me the Honour to Come to Bolderwood Next Month, and I should be glad to know what time you would like, for I then would contrive to make that my time for the Forest.

“I called att Hackwood, and the Duke of Bolton, bid me let you know that you may have the Hunter he recommended to you, but his price is 150 Guineas. That is a great Price so you should be well satisfied about him. I saw him, he is a fine strong Horse but I did not see him move. My Compliments to Lady Dutchess, and believe me

“Your Faithfull &

“Obedient Servant

“DELAWARR.”

The list of puppies follows:—

LIST OF PUPPYS, 1733

Pymont Curious Crownor 3 att Goodwood	}	att George Etheredges Farmer Savin Thomas Bren	}	Crimson & Cocker.
Sherewood Conqueror Smerkin	}	Richard Etheredge Charles Earleys John Plot	}	Careless & Cocker.
Blewman		John Young	{	Kindness & Ld. Tank'lls Blewman.
Darling		George Snouks	{	Venus & D. of St. Albans' Redcap.
Jumper Jugler Jupiter } Juno } Judith }	}	Ralph Street Peter Dove Farmer Linnington Haywood Mill	}	Dido & Jumper
Emperor Dashwood Bonny Lovely	}	Edward Wild Wm. Wings Peter Bailys Alice Maizey	}	Virgin & Jockey.

"4 att Bolderwood not yet put out.

12 couple. besides what yr Grace has att Goodwood out of Young Madam & Comfort. We have no more quarters in New Forest, except 2 to be kept at Bolderwood which I hope will be 2 of the 3 you have out of Crimson & Cocker."

Much the same sort of list a Huntsman or Kennel Manager might send to a Master in these days. On October 6th, 1733, the Duke of Bolton, writing from Newmarket

to the Duke of Richmond, in London, about the hunter already referred to, says:—

“MY DEAR LORD :

“I have the honour of your Grace’s Letter wch I would have answer’d ye last post butt I was willing to Inform my self a bout the horse of the man yt take’s care of my stud: he says wt your Grace has here inclos’d. My Lord as he never was Lame in his Life, & yt I think him by much the best & finest horse I ever saw, soe I was very desirous to have you have him. I desire you’ll keep him & hunt him, his price is wt you please, or if you’ll doe me the Honour to accept of him he is att your service. I shall be att Swakeley on Wensday next, & I will waite on you in town if I hear you are there for I am wyth ye greatest Esteem

“My Lord

“Your Graces most faithfull

“Humble Sert

“BOLTON.”

The agreement entered into between the Duke of Richmond and the Earl of Tankerville did not last long, and the latter, being appointed Master of the Royal Buckhounds in 1733, seems to have encroached on some parts of the New Forest which had previously been used by the Duke of Richmond’s Hounds during the early cubhunting season. For, on September 10th, 1734, there is a letter from Lord Delawarr to the Duke of Richmond, who was probably in France at that time, which runs as follows:—

“I never wanted you so much in my life as at present. That Dear Creature, the Earl of Tankerville, is Sending his Foxhounds into the Forest, Consequently yours must move, for there is not Game for three Packs, I came to London about it and desired him to stay till Yr Grace came over, that you might give orders where yours might go, but to

No Purpose. So I am returning, to go to Lord Lymingtons to day. This is hard & I think your Friend Tanky uses you but very indifferently, for you will not have a whelp Enterd; If I knew where I could Send them near Bear Forest I would instantly, to Findon would be eternal Ruin, because of the Sheep in the woods, too great temptatıon for young Hounds. I beg to hear from you, and as soon as I get down I will Send to see for some place near Bear Forest. I am My Ld.

“Yr, Graces

“Most faithfull

“ & Obedient Servt.

DELAWARR.”

The Dukedom of Abigny in France devolved upon His Grace of Richmond about this time, and a letter by Lord Delawarr, addressed to him there, evidently refers to some hounds which he had sent to him at his request a short time before. Their importation seems to have been a success and the Duke must have written to have told him so—to judge from the opening paragraph of Lord Delawarr’s letter of September 13th, 1734, which runs as follows:—

“MY LORD :

“I am to thank your Grace for the favour of yours of the 3 Inst. old S. from Paris. I rejoyce your Hounds I sent you have given you so much Pleasure, and acquitted themselves with so much honour when they encountered those of your Brother Grand Ecuyer, I luckily have A Couple of the Lancashire Chaps that were not able to proceed farther than London att that time. So we have the fewer to recruit for you. I have now good & Bad News to Send you, the first is that your Hounds are well, we have hunted six times and kill’d Six foxes, a Brace Yesterday, so miss’d but one Day that was occassion’d by A Violent Shower, for I think they ran harder that day than I ever saw them. The Bad is Andrews Black horse is Dead. He

hunted one day last Week, was rid by Tom who rid no faster than I did on Scarborough. The Horse came home perfectly well in all appearance but lay down in about ten minutes and stretch'd himself out and died. I am sorry but Tom is mad, for he was A great Favourite. But as no neglect or Carelessness was the Occasion of this Misfortune, I hope you will not have the Worse Opinion of Old Tom. Especially now Mr. Milburn is dead, and John Shaw I Suppose Succeeds, So recommend Old Tom to Succeed John Shaw, which is not recommending a bad Servant I assure you. But as he has always behaved well, desire his preferment. & in it you will oblige My Lord,

“Your Graces

“Most Faithfull &

“Obedient Servant,

“DELAWARR.”

The “Old Tom” referred to in the above letter was none other than Tom Johnson, whose reputation as a Huntsman in after years fully justified Lord Delawarr’s recommendation. He superseded Jack Ware, who was said to have been a very second-rate Hunt servant.

An account of sport in the New Forest, probably written in 1736, is most interesting. In describing it, Lord Delawarr’s letter to the Duke of Richmond says:—

“When I assure Your Grace, that I heartily wish you were well enough to make me happy with your Company at Bolderwood, I flatter my self that you do not doubt but that my wishes are Sincere. I really think we should Show you some sport. We had eight hours’ rain on Monday night, so Yesterday morning I sally’d forth with 21 couple of Hounds, we found a Brace of Foxes, and parted, Your humble Servant, my Groom, and Kit, went with the biggest Parcell, Jack Ware and Jo, with the others, who running up the Wind of us did not hear our Parcell, We ran him

Very handsomely, an hour and a quarter, and then hard for half an hour more, he had just time to Gett into a Coney borough, the Hounds were so near him that a Couple got into the Earth, and killd him, we dug out Fox and Hounds in A quarter of an Hour and flung him to the Pack, for Jack Ware, got to us with his Parcell just as we earth'd. I do not trouble with the particular Names and Places, because I believe you do not remember them. But your Hounds preform'd well, and what pleases me much is, I did not See a Hound run to the Water nor lap coming home. I will be as good a Negus as I can, and hope I shall have the pleasure of bringing them in good order into Sussex, and finding Your Grace there in good Health.

"I have taken upon me a little but do believe you will not disapprove, You must know that a little before I came down, when they were airing the young Hounds, the Boys got drunk and Jo was so drunk that he fell from his Horse, who came home, after having drank as much as he pleased, which was like to have kill'd him. (spit fire). (the name of the horse). The Boy came home some time after in a drunken Condition, upon which my Old Wised face Tom rebuk'd him, replication ensued, and when I came I was acquainted with this affair, but after I had writ my last. I sent for him, and have assured him that if I see or hear any thing of the like for the future, I will take your Graces Livery from him, and send him about his business, he was much astonisht, and has promised never to do so any more, and I believe the rough side of my Tongue may have done good. If I went too far, you will excuse me for I meant it in your Service. I will be as little from them as possible, till the Parliament meets, before which time I hope your Grace will be able to Hunt, for till their Brains are a little better settled, somebody must have an Eye over them. I went out this morning to Air the Young Hounds, they go very quietly, and do not so much as look att a Sheep, and will not offer to run att the Deer, how they will behave when they have

found of a scent I cannot say. I hope you have not forgot to write about having the Kennell and Stables att Findon repair'd, pray order the Troughs for the Hounds to feed in to be mended if they want, or new ones to be made if these are past repairing; Consider the Time draws nigh. My most Humble Service to Her Grace and believe me my Dear Duke, your most faithfull &

“Obedient Servant

“DELAWARR.”

I have given these various letters in full and with their original quaint spelling and grammar, because it seemed to me that they presented a very complete picture of the way that the Charlton Hunt was carried on under the Mastership of the 2nd Duke of Richmond, who, with the very able assistance of Lord Delawarr, showed sport of such high quality that lords and ladies came from all over England to Charlton, and the village—very little of which remains in these days—was crowded during the hunting season. The Master himself built a house which still stands, where he and the Duchess slept in order to be ready for the early meets which, in those days, were at eight o'clock in the morning. The walls of the principal rooms are ornamented with paintings relative to the chase, and remain almost the sole relics of those gay days when the flower of England's fox-hunters gathered in the great banqueting-room at Foxhall, which stood in the little village which lies in the valley north of the Goodwood hills.

On Friday, January 26th, 1738, hounds showed the Field a day's sport which is accounted for in the records of the Old Charlton Hunt as “The Grand Chase,” under the title of *A Full & Impartial Account of the late remarkable Proceedings att Charlton.*

“It has long been a matter of Controversy in the Hunting World, to what Particular Country or Sett of Men, the

superiority of Power belongs. Prejudice, and Partiality have had the greatest share in their Disputes, and every Society their proper Champions to assert the Preeminence, and bring home the Trophies to their own Country,—even Richmond Park has its Dimmock. But on Friday, the 26th of January, 1738-9, there was a decisive Engagement on the plains of Sussex, which after ten hour's struggle has settled all future debates, and given the Brush to the Gentlemen of Charlton.

“At a quarter before eight in the morning the Fox was found in Eastdean Wood, and ran an hour in that Cover, then into the forrest, up to Puntice Coppice, thro’ Herring Dean to the Marlowes up to Coney Coppice, back thro’ the Marlowes to the Forrest west gate, over the feilds to Nightingale bottom, to Cobdens at Draught, up his Pinepitt hanger, (there his Grace of St. Albans gott a fall) thro’ my Lady Lewkner’s buttocks, and *mist the Earth*, thro’ West dean forrest to the corner of Collar down (where Ld. Harcourt blew his first horse,) crost the Hacking place down the length of Coney Coppice, thro’ the Marlowes to Herring Dean into the Forrest, and Puntice Coppice, East Dean Wood, the lower Teagles, cross by Cocking course, down between Graffam and Woolavington, thro’ Mr. Orme’s park and paddock, over the heath to Fielder’s furses, to the Hurlands, Selham, Amersham, thro’ Totham Furses, over Totham heath almost to Cowdrey Park, there turn’d to the Lime-Kiln at the end of Cocking causeway, thro’ Cocking Park and furses, there crossed the road and up the Hill between Bepton and Cocking. (here the Unfortunate Lord Harcourt’s second horse felt the Effect of Long legs and a sudden steep, the best thing belonging to him was his saddle which my Lord had secured, but by bleeding and Geneva (contrary to the Act of Parliament) he recovered, and with some difficulty was got home, here Mr. Fouqueir’s Humanity claims your regard, who kindly sympathised with my Lord in his Misfortunes, and had not the power to

go beyond him.) At the bottom of Cocking warren the hounds turned to the left, across the road by the Barn, near Herring-dean, then took the side hills to the north gate of the Forrest, (here Br. Hawley thought it prudent to change his horse, for a *True-blew* that staid upon the Hills, B. Ives likewise took a horse of Sr. Harry Liddels) went quite thro' the Forrest and run the Foil, thro' Nightingale bottom, to Cobdens at Draught, up to his Pine-pitt hanger, to my Lady Lewkner's buttocks, thro' every Meuse she went in the morning, went thro' the Warren above Westdean, where we dropt Sr. H. Liddel, down to Binderton Farm, thro' Hayes bushes, Beechley bushes, to the Voldi, through Goodwood Park, (here the Duke of Richmond chose to send three lame Horses back to Charlton, and took Saucy-Face and Sr. Wm. that were very luckily at Goodwood) from thence at a distance Ld. Harry was seen driving his Horse before him to Charlton. The hounds went out at the upper end of the Park up to Stretington road, by Sally Coppice (where his Grace of Richmond got a somerset) through Halnaker Park over Halnaker hill to Sebbige farm, (there the Master of the Stag-hounds, Cornet Honeywood, Tom Johnson, and Nim Ives were throughly satisfied) up long-down, thro' Eartham common Feild to Kemp's High wood. (Here B. Ives tired his second Horse, and took Sr. Wm. by which the Duke of St. Albans had no great coat, so returned to Charlton.) From Kemp's high wood the hounds broke away thro' the Gumworth Warren, Kemp's ruff-piece, over Slindon down, to Madhurst Parsonage, where Billy came in, with them over Poor down, up to Madhurst down, Houghton Forrest, where His Grace of Richmond, Br. Hawley, and Mr. Pauncefort came in, the latter to little purpose, for beyond the Ruel hill, neither Mr. Pauncefort, or his horse Tinker cared to go, so wisely returned to his Impatient, Hungry Friends. Up the Ruel Hill, left Sherwood on the right hand, crost Offam hill to Southwood, from thence to South Stoke to the Wall of Arundell river,

where the Glorious Twenty Three Hounds putt an end to the Campaign, and killed The Old Bitch Fox, 10 mints. before six. Billy Ives, His Grace of Richmond, and Br. Hawley were the only Persons at the Death, to the Immortal Honour of 17 stone; and threescore, and *at least* as many campaigns."

There follows a summary of the estimated length of the hunt described above. It seems to me that perhaps it is somewhat exaggerated, but it is rated by experts of the time at 36 miles 2 furlongs and 24 rods as hounds ran; with an additional mile estimated by one man for the brooks, and a further additional 20 miles estimated by another for the amount of ground that hounds covered before the fox broke. In any case it must have been well over 35 miles.

Sport continued to flourish during the life of the 2nd Duke of Richmond, though the death, in 1744, of Tom Johnson, the Huntsman who had served the pack so well, was a sad blow to the Master and to the Field. In 1750, the 2nd Duke of Richmond died and his eldest son, Charles, who succeeded him, being only fifteen years old at that time, was unable to become a Master of Foxhounds, and consequently, says Lord Bathurst, "I think the hounds were dispersed and sold to other people."

As soon as the 3rd Duke came of age he started to form a fresh pack of hounds, and evidently tried to get back as much of the Old Charlton blood as possible; but although he caused splendid kennels to be built for his hounds at Goodwood, "it is probable," says the Earl of March, "that the removal of the pack from Charlton detracted somewhat from its general popularity," and accordingly, we are not surprised to find, in the list of the "Goodwood Hunt," as it was then called, that the members of it were pretty much confined to the County of Sussex.

The village of Charlton, which had increased amazingly during the years in which it was a hunting centre, dwindled

and shrunk and, to-day, there remain only a few cottages of the hamlet that was the "Melton Mowbray" of its day, the resort of the great and the wealthy, which was visited, not only by England's King, but by many famous men of many lands, who were eager to participate in the national British sport of fox-hunting.

I think it is interesting to learn that the laws and practices which governed the "Noble Science" two hundred years ago were very similar to what they are to-day—as the words written by Lord Tankerville, one-time Joint-Master of The Charlton Hunt with the 2nd Duke of Richmond, show. The instructions given by him to Hunt Servants as well as to the members of the Field are as follows:—

"The Hounds not to be kept behind the Huntsman in the Morning to whatever Country they go, except at times when they are oblig'd to go through Covers.

"The Whippers-in to be forward, and if any Hound, or more happens to prole from the Roade they goe, to call on them, but to use no whip, for if they know their Names at Home, they'll obey abroad.

"When you are come to your Beat the Huntsman only to Speak to the Hounds, and the less the better.

"The Whippers-in to have a good look out stop any Hounds that Steales away with the Scent, and leaves the Body of the Pack behind, unless tis a good one, and has time to give notice for the rest to be well laid in.

"The Whippers-in not to speak by way of encouraging any Hounds in Cover, but in case of Riot, then they shall *gently* rate them off.

"As soon as they have found, one Whipper-in to go with the Huntsman, the other to stay behind, to bring any stragling or tale Hound, or Hounds, that may be left behind, which will seldom happen if the two Boys knows their Buisiness, & dos their Duty.

"Tis not a part of the Buisiness of a Whipper-in at any time to Speak to a Hound, otherwise then keeping them together, or rate into the Huntsmen, who shu'd always be with the Main Boddy of the Hounds.

"Neither Huntsman, or Boys, to Speake to the Hounds, while running with a good Scent. On a midleing one the Huntsman to incourage his Hounds at discretion, without any other persons interfering.

"The Company always at a Distance that the Hounds may not be hurried, which is the loss of many a Fox, as well as the loss of a great deal of Beauty a good Pack of Hounds will shew at a Half Scent.

"When the Hounds from running comes to a Check, the Huntsman is not to Speak, but allow the Hounds to have their first Cast, and if after that, not hit off, the Huntsman to observe the point at which they threw up, and then to help the Hounds to the best of his Judgment, but without hurry, for when a Fox is Sinking, time must be taken, as he then runs short, and is often left behind by Clapping Down.

"The Gentlemen for their own Sakes will Observe that a Confabulation down the Wind often heads a Fox and indangers the whole day's Sport."

How like this is to the teachings of the great modern Huntsmen!

It was in 1762 that Henry, the 5th Duke of Beaufort, returning one day after an unsatisfactory hunt behind a stag, threw his hounds into Silk Wood, and having a great run with a fox, he steadied his hounds from deer after that time. Many staghound packs of that period hunted a fox when they could find one, though already foxes were becoming scarce in many parts of England, and, paradoxical as it may seem, fox-hunting became popular only in time to save the fox from extinction.

Packs which had hitherto been maintained only for stag-hunting gradually changed their quarry from stag to fox, and by 1750, Mr. Hugo Meynell's, the Brocklesby, the Badminton and the Belvoir—to say nothing of the Old Charlton Hunt, whose history I have already touched upon—had established fox-hunting as their recognised sport, and by their example to the less important packs extended its popularity throughout England. No one had greater influence on the sport of fox-hunting than John, Marquis of Granby, the eldest son of the 3rd Duke of Rutland. Fox-hunting was just beginning to rank as an acknowledged sport when he was a boy—the pursuit of the fox had only begun to pass from the stage of legitimate slaughter of vermin to the carefully regulated hunting of a privileged beast of the chase. It gradually grew to be the recreation of the middle-class County men as well as of the nobility, and in sharing the sport of his superiors in rank, the young middle-class Englishman began to acquire the good qualities of a governing race.

“Lord Granby,” writes Mr. T. F. Dale, “was the type of the Englishman formed by our school life and our sports. Both Granby and his brother had a love for an active life, and Granby turned his attention to raising a regiment of Leicestershire Blues, of which he became Colonel, retaining his rank when his men exchanged the sword for the ploughshare. With his father's hounds he acquired that fine eye for a country which marked him later in life as a General, and enabled him to see the strong and weak points of a position. War and hunting have often been compared, and they are, at all events, alike in this, that success in both is obtained by the seizing of quickly-passing opportunities. To hesitate is to lose the chance of winning a battle. Lord Granby was perhaps the first M.F.H. who ever led a cavalry charge, and certainly,” says Mr. Dale, “he was the most distinguished. Always to the front, always ready to fight, he and his men were ever in the place of danger. Generous to his Officers,

considerate of his men, careful of the sick and wounded, and forgetful of himself, a paladin of bravery and dash, the army adored him, and even in those days, when no war correspondents followed the army, his fame reached England and his popularity became unbounded.

"When he returned to England he was the most popular man of his day and on his homeward journey confidential messengers awaited him at every port to claim his support for the ministers in power. He was offered any post he chose to name and took the ordnance. It was no doubt a job, but no one could deny Lord Granby's fitness for any military post."

Lord Granby's popularity was not without its effect on the progress of fox-hunting. Indeed, it was the recreation of statesmen, and the Duke of Grafton, at that time Prime Minister, numbered two Masters of Hounds in his Cabinet. There seems to be little doubt that Lord Granby was Field Master at Belvoir, somewhere about 1766, just at the time of the founding of "The Gloucester Foxhunting Club" in America. The Belvoir Hounds of that day were of a smaller size than afterwards became the fashion; but they were a fast pack; there were few fences to stop them; and the Vale carried a good scent then, as it does now. Hunting behind them must have been a joy to Granby, whose political career was a great disappointment to him; for those were troublous years in Parliament, and Granby, who was a man of honour and integrity, was betrayed into actions of which he disapproved and afterwards regretted.

"So far as I can gather," says Mr. Dale, "he was always on the side of justice and liberty. He opposed the dismissal of officers from the army for political reasons and divided the Cabinet itself on the question of the tax on tea in dispute with the American colonies, a tax which Camden and Conway also desired should be repealed. Their action caused the eventual disruption of the Duke of Grafton's Ministry, and Lord Camden in the House of Lords, and Lord



GREY CARLY

A hunter of the 2nd Duke of Richmond

Granby in the Commons, spoke and voted against the Government. Only a few years before, Granby had entered political life with abundant renown and popularity; he left it a disappointed man, worn out with campaigning and hard living and harassed by his creditors. To fox-hunting, like his chief the Duke of Grafton, he owed the best and happiest moments of this portion of his life, and, after all his labours and his warfare, his most certain pleasure was to improve the family pack."

In those times fox-hunting was a very different proceeding from what it is to-day—or even a hundred years ago. In Lord Granby's day, hounds would leave their kennel early in the morning, and if they were lucky, perchance they would hit off the cold line of a "drag," often many hours old, left by some roving dog fox returning from his nightly rounds in search of food, or maybe later in the season when foxes go "a-clicketing," in search of a mate. I think hounds' scenting powers must have been better two hundred years ago, or maybe they were encouraged to hunt a colder line, but in any case, it is unquestionably true that in those days they hunted slowly on what we should term to-day a "stale line" until they unkennelled their quarry, and went away, usually to a far poorer start than that which the modern foxhound gets to-day from a small spinny in the Midlands.

People often wonder why the foxes of modern times so seldom furnish long hunts. I think that it is partly on account of the arterial roads and railways which intersect almost every hunting country and upon which constant traffic is for ever on the move. Foxes don't like to cross railway lines or arterial roads, and if they do attempt to cross them, they are often headed and turned back, sometimes into the very teeth of the oncoming pack which was "holloaed away" close behind them. What grand runs the sportsmen of two centuries ago must have had, behind a fast pack with no railway to hinder them, and no barbed-wire to hold them up, as it does to-day even in the most

fashionable and best-run countries. Scent must have been better then, for there were no artificial manures, no motor cars, and not so many sheep, or cattle, or people, to foil the line.

In those days I think far more depended on the Hounds, and far less on the Huntsman. *Hounds* hunted the fox, without the help (I might almost say—and without the interference) of their Huntsman, whose main duty was to keep them fit and well, and to teach them to HUNT their quarry to death, not to kill it after a short fast burst as many packs do in these days. It must have been a very different game—not necessarily a better one—but without doubt a much simpler one, in which men of small means could join with less strain on their bank accounts. Life was altogether simpler, and perhaps happier, when it was not lived at such high pressure.

About the time that the Marquis of Granby was beginning to take an interest in the development of the pack at Belvoir, a young man named Peter Beckford matriculated at New College, Oxford University. I have been unable to find out how long he remained at Oxford: there is no record of his having proceeded to a degree; but he must have devoted a great deal of his time to study; for he came back to his home in Dorsetshire with a thorough mastery of several foreign languages, as well as an amazing insight into the Classics and History, as is evinced by his later writings. I am inclined to think that he took no very active part in fox-hunting until after his return from a visit to Italy, in 1766, where he had gone after the death of his father two years before. It would be idle for me to try to tell anything further than is already known of Peter Beckford's life, or of the great influence which his book, *Thoughts on Hunting*, has had on the sport about which it is written—he was a dilettante and a lover of the Arts, as well as a sportsman; not an illiterate country squire as some modern writers have pictured him—but his influence on

fox-hunting in that part of England in which he dwelt cannot be denied.

His father, Julines Beckford, had originally come from Jamaica, where the family estates were situated, and on his death, Peter found himself in possession of an estate near Blandford in Dorsetshire, as well as a considerable fortune. He had always been interested in hounds and hunting—in fact, he had hunted with a pack of harriers in his boyhood, and now he decided to breed a proper pack of foxhounds. We must remember that there were no railways in those days, and that even the journey to Charlton was a good deal of an undertaking; so, perhaps, it is not to be wondered at that he decided to take up seriously the maintenance of a pack, with which to hunt the country about his home.

If one may believe that the painting by Francis Sartorius of two couples of Peter Beckford's hounds is accurate, one can get a good idea of the type of hound which Beckford strove to breed—hounds which seem to have possessed many of the same attributes sought after in these days—but of lighter build, and possessing rather less bone and size than we shall see was developed in the Nineteenth Century. Unhappily for the Masters of Foxhounds of the Eighteenth, Century, Beckford's health, as well as his private affairs made it impossible for him to carry on his hunting, and he was forced to give up his hounds and go abroad before he had achieved the goal which is so well described in the book which lived after him, and has become the text-book of so many Masters of Hounds and hunting men.

CHAPTER THREE

IRELAND SENDS KERRY BEAGLES TO MARYLAND, WHERE THEY
BECOME THE TAP-ROOT OF THE AMERICAN FOXHOUND

THE SCENE changes—we are back on the Western side of the Atlantic. The wars which resulted in the independence of the American people have become history. From Maine to Georgia and west to the Mississippi Valley, thirteen colonies have formed themselves into the United States of America. To the north, the Provinces of the Dominion of Canada are still under English rule, occupied by British military units. What wonder, then, that the sport of fox-hunting was fostered there early in the nineteenth century!

I have before me a book by that well-known hunting scribe, Charles James Apperley, entitled *Nimrod Abroad*, and in the front of it is pasted the book-plate of Captain C. A. Brooke, of the Sixth Royal Regiment—mayhap some relation of that Brooke who brought foxhounds to America about the middle of the Seventeenth Century. Now, Nimrod never crossed the Atlantic; but he was well aware that the sport of fox-hunting was carried on there by his countrymen, and I think that his description of the early days of the Montreal Hunt—which was founded in 1826—gives an interesting picture of sport at that time:—

“There is fox-hunting as well as racing in Canada,” he says. “A pack of foxhounds are kept at Montreal, and are said to owe their origin to a sporting English butcher, who brought a few couples with him from the mother country. A club was afterwards formed, and the hounds being hunted by a very clever fellow, named Morris, have showed as much sport as, from their short season and awkward country, could have been looked for.

"The following excellent description of the huntsman to the Montreal pack was given some time ago in a number of the *New Sporting Magazine*:—

" 'Morris, the present huntsman, who had been whip somewhere in England, succeeded "Marrowbones" (i.e., the butcher who set the thing a-going), and a better hand to get away with hounds, and live with them, never wore a cap. His nerve is astonishing, and he rides a horse well calculated to indulge his aspiring propensities. Set Morris on York, and what will stop them? No man as yet was ever born perfect; and it would be better if Morris had some of his predecessor's, old Smithfield's, qualities in cover, in seeing more of his hounds, and keeping a keener eye to them, when going from, and coming home. But he has many redeeming virtues.

" 'They hunted until the present season the immediate neighbourhood of Montreal, and a country called "*Point Clair*," almost eighteen miles from home. The former was heavy work, large covers and large swamps; and *Jean Baptiste*, harped on by *Monsieur Papineau*, occasionally turned out with pitchforks, and even with guns, to stop *les sacrés chasseurs du Roi*, as they termed the lads in scarlet.'

" 'And here a good story of Morris will not be out of place. Wishing to go the nearest way from one cover to another, the field, early last season, took a road leading through the farm of an inhabitant, and passed close to his dwelling; but on approaching the *maison*, they were met by the whole force thereof, *le pere de famille*, armed with a gun, his sons with pitchforks, whilst the women screamed *sacré* on the red-coated riders. Not wishing to raise a whole village by shewing fight, they turned their horses' heads to the regular road. Morris, however, not liking so much trouble, cleared a five-railed fence, and was making his way at a canter, with the pack at his heels, when he was brought up by some late standing oats, and surrounded by the owners of the soil. Sadly beset by three or four of the pitch-

fork-armed, he, either to give the field notice of his danger, or by chance, pulled out his horn, when, to his astonishment, down on their marrow-bones dropped his formidable foes, crying out most heartily, *O mon Dieu, ne tirez pas!* Morris, taking advantage of their, to him, glorious mistake, nearly frightened them to death, and then rode off to tell the field so good a joke.'

"After describing the club-dinner, at which, as is the case with most other hunting club-dinners, 'the flow of soul and song, the ebullition of honest English feeling, true to church and state, the sporting toasts, and more sporting men who surrounded the mahogany, told that England's sons were there,' this spirited writer thus puts before his readers the most interesting parts of a run which the same pack had in a fresh country, having given up that of *Point Clair*, on account of its great distance from Montreal:—

"'Strong was the muster at the *traverse-boat* in the morning, and ominously joyful looked the face of each man as he rode into the boat. A southerly wind and a cloudy sky proclaimed it a hunting morning, and many a joking prognostication was made as to what was to take place, until landed on the opposite shore. They began by trying some small covers about four miles from the place of landing, which were drawn blank. They then headed towards *La Prairie*, and it was not long before was heard Morris's welcome sound of "Hark to Music! hark." He (the fox) had gone off in great haste, and it was some time before the pack got away to the leading hounds. Together, however, they got, with a burning scent, and there they went, bursting from one small knoll of grass and weeds to another, with a crash of tongue that was maddening. His line was evidently to a large cover, not a great distance off. This however, he merely skirted: and now they gallantly headed to the common country, before described, with a scent breast high, and the pace a racing one. He went

straight for almost four miles, when he was headed back by some people ploughing, and made again for the small covers where he was found. These he ran through, going his best for the large one; but instead of resigning, or staying in his piece of old cover, he went through it like a line. And now the pack dashed into view, fast and direct for the Chambly River, which they soon reached, and now they stem the running stream. *Water* was something new to two of the field, now leading, who pulled rein, and cast many a wistful look at the gallant pack as they shot away over the *La Prairie* common, whilst a tablecloth might have covered them. Morris, however, at the moment came up, and went at it, as he goes at everything, jumping down a bank into the river. Old York disappeared, and the only thing to be seen was the cap of his rider. Duck-like, however, they rose again, and in a few moments every scarlet coat was breast-high in the Chambly's turbid waters. "Forward!" was the cry. His line was now evidently right across the *La Prairie* common, and across it he did go, and those after him that would not leave him, crossing the new line of railroad between that and St. John's, and he was run into about a mile farther on. Most of the field were up to see the worry. The distance *without a check*, must have been something like fourteen miles.'

"It appears the Montreal Foxhounds have now entered upon their twelfth season and are the only regularly-appointed pack on the entire continent of North America; and although for the first two or three years they had many difficulties to contend against, yet, by spirit and perseverance on the part of the club, everything connected with the hounds and kennel has been brought to a state of efficiency that would bear a comparison with many provincial packs in the old country.

"But, it may be asked, how can the chase be carried on, according to English notions of it, in a land where nearly all is wood and forest? This, however, is not the case.

Although immense woods abound in Canada, the district of Montreal is well cultivated and populous, and for the most part cleared of its primeval forests. The fencing is chiefly timber, and in parts loose walls; but those of the former description are of a formidable nature, from their strength, as also by the addition of one or two ditches.

"The following amusing description is given of a little running-riot of a proprietor, which has, of late years, now and then occurred in our own country:—

"As an instance of what the *suaviter in modo* may sometimes effect with this most primitive people,' says the amusing writer I quote from, 'I recollect, on one occasion, the hounds coming to a check, the whole field was stopped by a *Monsieur Herbert*, who protested, with many words, and much gesticulation, *à la Française*, that his farm should not be trespassed upon, for his grounds were injured, his fences broken, &c. Some of the party were for a knockdown argument, and were in the act of proceeding accordingly, when F—— came forward, saying, "Let me manage him." F—— first of all bent almost to the saddle-tree, and taking off his hat with a grace, invited *Monsieur* to mount and join in the chase, assuring him little or no injury was done to his ground; and as for the fences; they were all leaped over, and never so much as touched. "*Nous verrons bientôt cela*," was the reply, and leading the way to a "*Boulein*" fence, (composed of three or four large trunks of the cedar-tree, placed one above the other, with occasionally a ditch on one side or the other) looking very much like a stopper, the Frenchman pointed to it with a triumphant wagging of the head. F—— was over before *Monsieur* could look at it a second time, and quickly followed by the whole field, about twenty, and, as good luck would have it, without a single mistake. The exclamations of *Monsieur* became more and more energetic as each horseman gallantly cleared his formidable barrier. "*Tonnerre! Mon Dieu!! Sacré bleu!!!*" he exclaimed, sufficiently evincing astonishment and delight

which ended by his giving consent to ride over the farm and hunt the covers as often as we pleased.'

"In proof that fox-hunting is the school of war, as the chase is acknowledged to be its image, the writer states that the members of the Montreal Hunt were the first to offer their services in the late rebellion, and also that all the officers, and many of the privates, of the Montreal cavalry, who distinguished themselves at the battle of *St. Charles*, which is now a matter of history, were fox-hunters good and true.

"It appears that steeple-racing is patronised by the Montreal Hunt. One took place last year, which the Governor and his suite attended. Nine horses started: several of the leaps were from fifteen to eighteen feet in width, and fences five feet high. Six of the horses were distanced. The winner was the property of Colonel Whyte, of the 7th Hussars, and was ridden by himself."

Since the Montreal Hunt Cup—a Steeplechase for Hunters—was inaugurated in 1837, it is probable that the above description refers to that. It is interesting to note, in this connection, that racing in Canada at that time was said to owe its existence to the patronage of one of the earlier Dukes of Richmond—probably the same one who was Master of The Old Charlton Hunt.

It may be noticed that "Nimrod" states that the Montreal Foxhounds were the "only regularly-appointed pack on the entire continent of North America," and I suppose that, at the time of writing (approximately 1840), this statement was true. In fact, I rather doubt if, in the British sense, any other "regularly-appointed" pack of hounds existed on the American continent until many years later—except perhaps at Toronto, where a pack was established by the Imperial garrison there. It is impossible to state the exact date when foxhounds were first brought into that district, but some time prior to 1842, hounds were purchased by friends of the Officers in England, and paid for by the Officers of the

garrison in Toronto, who seem to have formed themselves into an organisation under the Mastership of Colonel Elliott, R.C.R., which was recognised as The Toronto Hunt.

But, if there was no "regularly-appointed" pack in existence in the United States, we must not suppose for an instant that fox-hunting ceased when the wars were over and the inhabitants of the newly-formed nation had the time and money to devote to such matters. In the South particularly, where many of the planters were men of means who had hunted from boyhood, fox-hunting was a recognised sport, and until the outbreak of the Civil War, in 1861, there were many private packs throughout Georgia, the Carolinas, Kentucky, and as far north as Pennsylvania—not forgetting, of course, Virginia and Maryland, which were really the home of fox-hunting in the States. Around 1814—the exact date is somewhat confused—Bolton Jackson, Esq., imported two "Irish Foxhounds"—*Mountain* and *Muse*—which had been given to him by the Duke of Leeds, who had married a member of the Charles Carroll of Carrollton family of Maryland. An article in *The American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine* of February, 1832, says: "The most remarkable and distinct family of hounds sprang from two that were brought into the country, some twenty-odd years since, from Ireland by Bolton Jackson, Esquire. They fell into the hands of Colonel Sterrett Ridgely, at that time one of the most gallant horsemen as well as one of the most ardent and hospitable sportsmen in the State. They were remarkable, as are their descendants, according to their degree of the original blood, for great speed and pre perseverance, extreme ardour, and for *casting ahead* at a loss; and in this, and their shrill chopping unmusical notes, they were distinguished from the old stock of that day; which, when they came to a loss, would *go back*, and *dwelling*, take it along, inch by inch, until they got fairly off again, whilst these Irish dogs would cast widely, and by taking their hit ahead, would keep their game at the top of his speed, and break

him down in the first half-hour. Colonel Ridgely presented these two hounds, *Mountain* and *Muse*, to Governor Samuel Ogle of Maryland and the blood of these Irish dogs was presumably maintained in the Governor's kennel at Bellair. A bitch called *Sophy* seems to have been the most noted of their progeny—so outstanding that a portrait of her hung in his Library.”

“The next call on the visiting-list of this celebrated pair of Irish hounds,” says a recent writer, “as ‘Homewood,’ the estate of Mr. Charles Carroll, Junior, and after that the couple became separated when Doctor James Buchanan, who lived near Sharpsburg, Maryland, came into the possession of *Mountain*.” Later, Thomas Henry, of Virginia, a grandson of Patrick Henry, obtained the dog *Captain*, who was by *Traveller*, out of *Sophy*, from Doctor Buchanan, thus acquiring an in-bred stallion hound, since both his sire and dam were by *Mountain* out of *Muse*.

Concerning this great dog, Mr. Haiden C. Trigg says, in his book, *The American Foxhound*: “In the early forties Doctor Henry (grandson of Patrick Henry) of Virginia, presented George L. F. Birdsong, of Thomaston, Georgia, with a pair of puppies from his pack of hounds, which at that time had made an enviable reputation in Virginia. Mr. Birdsong sent a wagon overland (there being no railroad at that time) for the dogs. They proved to be superior to any dogs he had owned up to that time. In 1844 or 1845, Doctor Henry, being threatened with consumption, was ordered South by his physician. He started, travelling leisurely by wagon, accompanied by a party of friends, carrying his fine kennel of hounds with him, stopping at various points, and putting in the time hunting as it suited their fancy. Mr. Birdsong, hearing of his journey, intercepted Doctor Henry *en route* and spent some days with him. Shortly after reaching his destination in Florida, many of Doctor Henry's hounds were killed by alligators and he soon realised that his much-prized pack would be exter-

minated if something was not done. He wrote the facts to Mr. Birdsong, telling him that he might have the remnants of his famous pack, if he would come after them; and the latter, while sympathising with his friend in his misfortune, was glad of an opportunity to secure these much-coveted hounds and at once started after them."

Now, I have gone into these somewhat tiresome details because it seemed to me particularly interesting to fox-hunting men, and to hound-breeders in particular, to learn these facts concerning one of the fountain-heads of American Foxhound blood. *Mountain* and *Muse* were not foxhounds in the true sense of the word. They were undoubtedly nothing more nor less than Kerry Beagles, probably sprung from the same stock as the famous black-and-tan pack which to-day is maintained in Ireland by the Ryan family of Scarteen. The Kerry Beagles of the present day are as unlike the standard Beagle of the day as possible. Judging from the name of this breed, one would expect to see a little hound from 14 to 15 inches high; whereas, the Kerry Beagle is described in Rawdon B. Lee's *Modern Dogs* as a big hound, standing 24 or 25 inches at the shoulder. The Scarteen pack, which has certainly been kept going since 1735, is somewhat smaller than this; but the breed has changed very little on the whole. Sir John Buchanan-Jardine, Bt., M.F.H. says, in *Hounds of the World*: "Other packs were kept by the O'Connell family of Lake View, Kerry, and the Chute family of Chute Hall, Kerry; but the Scarteen absorbed the best elements in both packs on their dispersal. The origin of the breed seems rather uncertain; they are always supposed to have 'come from France,' but then, the same may be said more or less of all scenting hounds in existence to-day, so that seems rather too vague. The first Mr. Ryan is reputed to have imported some hounds from the South-West of France, in, or just before, 1735. Coming from that part of France, they would be most probably either *Gascon* or *Gascon-Ariégeois* hounds.

Both breeds are occasionally black-and-tan in colour, though usually blue-mottled, and the latter sometimes black-and-white. These strains, still to be found in the south-west of France, have wonderful noses and absolutely the finest music of any hounds in the world."

Mr. D. E. C. Price, who hunted the Scarteen Hounds for many seasons, makes a most interesting remark in a letter written to Sir John Buchanan-Jardine. He says: "They cast in a different way from most foxhounds. doing most of it on their own. When the leaders are at fault, the tail hounds fan round them to left and right, driving on at the same time. If they are still at fault, they will make a big cast all the way round, as a pack, not as individuals, as most Fell Hounds do—most of this at the gallop. I don't think I have ever seen hounds do a really big 'all round your hat' cast, quite on their own, although, no doubt, there are some that do."

This remark is particularly noteworthy, when one remembers the statement in the article quoted from *The American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine*, in describing *Mountain and Muse*, that "they were remarkable for casting ahead when they came to a loss, as distinguished from the old stock of that day."

I wish it were possible to give a better picture of the sport as it was carried on in America in that period between 1812 and the outbreak of the American Civil War; but, although hunting was kept up in some form or other, all over the country, the sport was mainly without organisation of any sort. The planters of the South, as I have already said, were well able to indulge their tastes and follow their inclinations. Most of them had assured incomes and lived up to them, spending part of their winters in New Orleans or Cuba, and their summers in the North. They were well educated at the best colleges in the land, and many of them were fine scholars who could write well and entertainingly. Thomas Nelson Page, in one of his sketches of Virginia life,

writes: "The chief sport, however, was fox-hunting. It was, in season, almost universal. Who that lived in that time does not remember the foxhunts—the eager chase after 'greys' or 'reds!' The greys furnished more fun, the reds more excitement. The greys did not run so far, but usually kept near home, going in a circuit of six or eight miles. 'An old red,' generally so called irrespective of age, as a tribute to his prowess, might lead the dogs all day, and end by losing them as evening fell, after taking them a dead stretch for thirty miles. The capture of a grey was what men boasted of; a chase after 'an old red' was what they 'yarned' about. Some old reds became historical characters, and were as much discussed in the counties they inhabited as the leaders of the bar or the crack speakers of the circuit. The wiles and guiles of each veteran were the pride of his neighbours and hunters. Many of them had names. Gentlemen discussed them at their club dinners; lawyers told stories about them in the 'lawyers' rooms' at the courthouse; young men, while they waited for the preacher to get well into the service before going into church, bragged about them in the churchyards on Sundays. There was one such that I remember. He was known as 'Nat Turner,' after the notorious leader of 'Nat Turner's Rebellion,' who remained in hiding for weeks after all his followers were taken."

George L. F. Birdsong was one of this class; his time, fortune and life were spent with books and field sports, until the beginning of the War between the States, when his fortune was given to the Southern cause. His passion was fox-hunting, and his hounds were bred along as careful lines as the turfman follows in the breeding of his thoroughbreds. Around Thomaston, Georgia, Mr. Birdsong's home, the country was particularly adapted for the chase. There were thousands of acres of cleared fields, with no burrows for the fox to take refuge in when hard pressed—save a few, out of which foxes could be easily dug.

Prior to the War there had been no organised clubs in Virginia, and the fact is easily accounted for when one remembers that each country home in the State was practically a club-house open to the friends of its owner. Every country gentleman who maintained a pack of hounds welcomed any neighbour, and these in turn would pass on and hunt with some other neighbour's pack, so that until the North and South were at odds, a Virginia or Maryland sportsman could secure a run every day of the week. This picture of hospitality disappeared with Lee's surrender at Appomattox and gradually a new order of things prevailed in fox-hunting.

Clubs began to be formed so that many sportsmen could share the expense of maintaining the pack, and in this way the hunt organisations of Maryland and Virginia were founded. In Virginia this mode of hunting was further promoted by the advent of a number of Englishmen, many of whom were keen sportsmen.

Speaking of *The Washington Hunt*, of which the British Minister, Sir Charles Vaughan, was President, Mr. van Urk, in *The Story of American Foxhunting*, says that all the members of the British Legation, Judges, Senators, Congressmen, Army and Navy Officers, young blades of the City, and a dozen or more charming women, were also members of the Hunt, which flourished in the District of Columbia, through the administrations of Jackson, Van Buren, and Tyler—(1828 to 1844)—with a degree of brilliancy and success, and was widely known throughout the Southern States.

It became very wealthy, and as a result had an excellent pack of native hounds, gathered from Maryland, Virginia and the Carolinas. A "Fox-hunting Journal" kept by one of the Washington Hunt members recorded daily meets. In it are notations showing that the sportsmen of the Club were so keen that they often "invited the whole neighbourhood to hunt" with them. On bye-days, when the Club hounds were in kennel, hunting continued for everyone,

behind the packs of Messrs. Neale, Jefferies, Clayton, Mitchell and Forbes. Each of these noted Masters of Foxhounds appeared for these meets with at least "eight picked dogs." After the chase, at "grog time," there was always a party, for which a "big bowl of apple-toddy had generally been made ready." When this had been emptied, refilled and emptied a few times, a feast of the "finest oysters, terrapins, Baltimore beef, and every delicacy in season awaited."

Red foxes abounded in the vicinity of the Capital, and *The Turf Register* contains many accounts of runs with the Washington pack. One, on November 17, 1831, described how a party of cavaliers passed over the "Capitolian Hill" and proceeded to the Bladensburg road, in answer to a call for help from many a housewife whose poultry was being sorely depleted by Reynard. In the party besides "plain cits, there were politicians of the *ins* and *outs*, officers and *diplomats* of various degrees; majors and generals, *chargés* and *attachés*; the black-eyed Frenchman, the round-faced Mynheer, the portly Swede, waiting the arrival of Mr. (Mason) Clark and his hounds."

It was the first turnout of the season, and I think the Hunt staff must have celebrated, in anticipation of the coming sport, the night before; for there is no record given in *The Turf Register* of that day. However, later meets were more successful, and we find an account of one day's sport which is certainly worth recording:—

"Were it not for the chase it is hard to say what would be the intestine condition of foreign legations and high dignitaries of state at this season of labour and feasting. Mr. Buchanan (an *attaché* of the British Embassy) kindly gave me a 'mount'; and, with a party of a dozen, and twelve couple of hounds, we crossed the bridge at half-past eight. A large grey was unkennelled on Piney Hills; but the work there getting too hot, he broke gallantly away to the Alexandria road. Finding the cover on the flats too open, he regained the black-jack and ivy shelters on the hill.



FULL CRY —THE MONTELEONE, 1872

From a painting by Charles Ithiers 1872

Closely pressed there again, it was half an hour before he could gain distance to make his run for the Factory Hills. At last he got away; and cunningly availing himself of houses, sheep, cur dogs, and cross roads, brought the pack to a check for half an hour."

An old sportsman, "not an old man," also had something to say about hounds which again displayed an ever-increasing attention to breeding.

"I have expressed a wish to have ten or fifteen of the old worn out, and some good for nothing hounds drafted and sent away, but it is not popular with the club. The fact is, we have too many tail dogs, and being true hounds and of free tongue, they draw back to them many good young hounds. The consequence is, that we soon have two packs, some six or ten head dogs going away with the fox at a killing pace, while the main pack is gradually sinking into a cold drag, and soon come to a standstill, in a road or ploughed field. The best packs have only one or two old trailing hounds in it, which are never seen or heard of after the fox is up. The truth is, *we want more old huntsmen and fewer old hounds.*"

Apparently the wish on this occasion seems to have been "father to the thought," for shortly afterwards we find an entry in *The Turf Register*—which might be likened to its British contemporary, *The Sporting Magazine*—which records that "Messrs. Adams and Buchanan, of the British Legation, members of the Washington Hunt, have received from their friends in England, two dogs and two bitches, black and white, for their kennel in Washington—and more recently Capt. Stockton of the Navy, being in England, on affairs of magnitude as compared with the progress of great public works, did not forget to bring home two couple from the crack kennels of England, one for himself, and with gratitude be it recorded, one couple for *The Turf Register.*"

Perhaps it might be explained that fox-hunting in those days was really followed in three ways. In the first place,

some packs—very few—were hunted in the orthodox English manner, with a professional or amateur Huntsman and Whippers-in. The maintenance of such establishments as this was confined to one or two subscription packs—and perhaps half a dozen private ones. By far the most numerous, however, were those packs of hounds which were maintained somewhat after the manner of trencher-fed packs in England—neighbouring Masters, each with a few couple of hounds, joining together and hunting as it suited their fancy. In the South, Huntsmen, and Whippers-in (if any) followed hounds on horseback, not attempting to follow them closely—the terrain was such that this would sometimes have been impossible—but riding points and keeping their hounds in sight, whenever it could be done. The third sort of hunting was that followed in some places in the Northern States, where the hounds used were not, as a rule, so fast, and where the “sport” (?) consisted in the hunter sitting close to a runway, with a gun in his hands, hoping for a chance to kill the quarry as it was driven by his slow, low-scenting deep-voiced hounds. To the modern fox-hunter, this procedure, of course, savours of vulpicide; but that is the way the New England farmer of the early days of the Nineteenth Century hunted. On Long Island, and in parts of New Jersey, there were a few owners of fox-hounds who hunted from a buggy—and for the benefit of British readers I may say that a “buggy” is a light four-wheeled vehicle, usually drawn by one horse, and accommodating two persons. I only mention this in passing, because it seems to me of interest as a novel method of fox-hunting which was practised in “The States” at one time.

There was an excellent pack of hounds near Baltimore, Maryland, and an account of a day in the field with this pack is, I think, of interest. It appeared in *The American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine* of December, 1829, and is entitled “A Morning with the Baltimore Hounds.” “I was

kindly favoured with an invitation to join a small party this morning, on a hunt near Baltimore,—at six I found a good breakfast waiting at a house in which, whatever its inmates may do, the spirit of hospitality never sleeps. The very anticipation of exercise and exhilaration seemed to impart the appetite which usually succeeds them—we ate heartily, and impatient to hear the first ‘challenge’ on the drag of sly reynard, quickly mounted our good steeds for the chase. As we passed from the fumes of the town fairly over the hills into the country, we saw the ‘king of day’ rising in the east, and as with the wand of Midas turning every cloud he touched into gold, and presenting to the view a sight that for gorgeousness and brilliant effulgency I thought I had never before witnessed.

“This sight alone, with the sharp fresh air of the morning, would have compensated me for rising, I must confess, a little earlier than usual. In less than an hour the dogs were thrown into Kimmel’s cover. A cold drag was touched here and there, just enough to show that the enemy had been there during the night, but this cover was thoroughly drawn without a find. Mr. P., an old Huntsman, who seems to have a sort of presentiment where reynard has chosen his kennel for the day, threw the dogs into another cover, which had heretofore been passed by—little Rube gave tongue in a water furrow leading to the cover, others came and verified her report, and after a little perplexity, the cry became more animated, swelling by degrees from the solitary note, and occasional check, to the warm and full cry, and lastly, the exhilarating burst.

“Whether sluggish from being recently gorged, or conscious of his resources near at hand, reynard lingered in his kennel until his pursuers were so near that he dared not break cover. It was fifteen minutes that he doubled in a small thick wood before he could gain distance sufficient to clear his brush in a break through an open field. The cry during this time was one glorious incessant roar; each

hunter took his stand in the field, watching with breathless eagerness to see him break away. At last he gained distance, and leaving the cover, was tallyho'd in passing through a corn field about a quarter of a mile away. The pack was pressing him hard; and as the quarry passed, it was evident from his open mouth and the sluggish way in which he moved that we couldn't count on a gallant run. Close at his brush, the hounds entered the next cover, where, each striving for the lead, in less than five minutes more, a large red fox was run to earth.

"It was the first time I had seen this pack, consisting of seven couples of excellent dogs, in the finest order and spirit, though I thought too large a proportion were young, appearing to have been entered this season. A gentleman in the company told me that he was daily expecting two couple of broke dogs from friends in Virginia. It was evident that their game could not have stood up half an hour longer, but it was supposed that the old rogue had, about daylight, put a crippled fat canvas-back duck under his belt. If *he* did not, I know who did, not many hours after, by the grace of God and a good friend in Gay Street."

Not far away, in Fairfax County, Virginia, three sportsmen—Messrs. Terrett, Chichester and Darne, hunted the country with their combined packs, and a most interesting account of a day's sport was published in *The Turf Register*. The correspondent was evidently a local sportsman—a sort of American "Nimrod"—though his style of describing the hunt is hardly the same. "We met," he says, "at 'The Pines' on New Year's Day to hunt Ravensworth and the neighbouring ground, and a more beautiful district for the delightful sport could not be found. The country is cleared and open, with here and there a copse of wood and pine thicket, and little or no fencing for miles. From the number and respectability of the Field of well-mounted



WITH BRUSH IN VIEW

From a painting of early American fox-hunting No. 1 in the possession of Dr. Wyndham B. Blanton

horsemen, and the number, beauty, and condition of the hounds, it is evident that fox-hunting has lost none of its charm in Fairfax County. Twenty-one horsemen and twenty-one couples of hounds were at the place agreed upon at the appointed time. The pack was thrown off west of the Winchester Turnpike; unkennelled a red fox in ten minutes, and drove him at a slashing pace to the centre of Ravensworth; where after a quick succession of doubles over a ground stained by sheep, he was run into and killed, after a splendid chase of forty-five minutes. The fox was tally'd every five minutes, and the pack was constantly in our view. No less than an hour after the Fox Harbour cover was drawn, *two* red foxes were unkennelled. Thirteen couples went away with one, and eight couples with the other, and both sets of dogs killed their fox in fine style—the first in one hour and thirty minutes, the second in less than two hours. Before parting for the night, it was agreed to hunt the next day; and accordingly we had the same Field and the same hounds. A red fox was found and run to ground in little more than an hour; and another killed in one hour and fifty minutes. This last chase was like the first—a straight run of some eight miles, closing with a quick succession of doubles over pasture ground, the fox tally'd every five minutes, and the pack constantly in view. Thus ended the day's sport—rarely equalled in the annals of the chase: and wanting nothing but an uniform dress to give it all the splendour of an English foxhunt, and render it worthy of the pen of a Somerville or a Beckford."

Now this writer seems to me to have a far better idea of fox-hunting than a great many of the American correspondents of that day. He goes on to say: "As to the various breeds of hounds in this country, so little attention has been paid to the stock from which they have been bred, that nothing can be distinctly affirmed in regard to them. There has been no system. From the days of our Colonial dependence to the present time (1833) it has been our habit

to cry up English superiority in everything,—English law, English liberty—etc. Now, we hold the superiority of England, over all countries, to be in nothing more superlative or indisputable than in the chase. How costly must be the fixtures, and how complete the appointments that enable them to bring into the field, through the season, from twenty to forty couples of hounds, well matched in size, colour, and speed; fifty or sixty sportsmen, all well and uniformly dressed in fair top-boots, buckskin breeches, and scarlet or green coats. The sport, for many obvious reasons, can never be brought to such perfection in this country as in England. We have too much wood and rock and mountain, we are too much intersected, in the flat districts, with impassible water-courses. But, above all, we have not the leisure and the wealth possessed by English noblemen, whose opulence is in inverse ratio to the poverty of the mass of the people. Still, we have means and opportunity for much wholesome and delightful enjoyment, and this without much expense or detriment, if gentlemen in different neighbourhoods would form themselves into small clubs or informal associations for hunting.”

I suspect that the correspondent who wrote these words was none other than John Stuart Skinner, the Editor of *The American Turf Register and Sporting Magazine* (1829-1844). He was born on February 22nd, 1788; studied at Charlotte Hall, one of the best classical academies in Maryland; read law at Annapolis; and passed his Bar examinations at the age of twenty-one. In 1816, President Madison appointed him Postmaster at Baltimore—at that time the third city in the Union. He and his family were the subjects of a most interesting volume by that well-known American sportsman, the late Harry Worcester Smith, in a book entitled *A Sporting Family of the Old South*.

One of the best-known of the early writers on American sport during the period which I have just described was William Henry Herbert, who, under the name of “Frank

Forrester," wrote many books dealing with various phases of outdoor sport—racing, shooting, big-game hunting, and the like—in the United States. Mr. Herbert, however, although he had hunted in England, failed to recognise the extent to which the sport was carried on overseas at the time at which he wrote. He apparently did not realise that there were many packs of hounds in existence in America; for in his book, *Field Sports in the United States*, published in 1848, he says: "Hunting, or Coursing *proper*, does not exist on this continent; the great topics, therefore, of condition, training, summering, and riding hunters to hounds, are, of course, out of the question; as well as the kindred subjects of the management of greyhounds, kennel treatment and hunting of hounds, and lastly, all connected with the noble science of falconry."

I give the above quotation merely to show that even the best authorities in the United States—and Mr. Herbert was undoubtedly one of them—seemed to have been unaware of what was going on along certain lines, although contemporary writers in England—notably "Nimrod"—had a good deal to say about the sport of fox-hunting in America, as we have seen from the excerpts given above from *Nimrod Abroad*. The paucity of contemporary descriptions of sport in the United States makes it very difficult to give as interesting a picture as might have been the case if America had been blessed with hunting correspondents like "Nimrod" or "The Druid."

CHAPTER FOUR

THE "GOLDEN AGE" OF FOX-HUNTING IN ENGLAND

ONE OF THE greatest difficulties which cropped up in attempting to describe the fox-hunting which went on in America during that period which began shortly after the end of the Eighteenth Century and ended with the outbreak of the Civil War, was, as has already been stated, the scarcity of hunting correspondents. Luckily for those who seek to know something of the history of sport, such a condition did not exist in England. In fact, at no time in the history of hunting has the story been better told. Charles James Apperley, Surtees, and other correspondents of the sporting papers, kept the public well informed of what was going on; famous Masters of Hounds, like Hugo Meynell and the two Tom Smiths, to name three of the best known, wrote books on the theory and practice of fox-hunting and their own experiences in the hunting field; and the sport itself played a very prominent part in the social life of England. With such a wealth of material to choose from, the difficulties which confront the seeker after local colour fade away, and the picture of the increasing popularity of fox-hunting until it had become the national sport of Great Britain becomes clear.

I suppose that the best-known writers on fox-hunting at that period was perhaps Robert Smith Surtees, whose sporting novels not only give a delightful picture of the times in which he lived, but also contain much real information for the seeker after hunting knowledge. His contemporary and friend, Charles James Apperley, who wrote under the pseudonym of "Nimrod"—by which he was perhaps best known—was a man of very different

character, both in his writing and in his way of life. He was not a novelist; he created no characters, such as the immortal "John Jorrocks," "Facey Romford," "Soapey Sponge" and the others who peopled the stories which made his friend famous. He was rather a hunting correspondent and, as such, he stands alone—not only during the years in which he hunted behind most of the famous packs of England, but also during the entire history of fox-hunting. Pennell-Elmhirst—who wrote under the *nom de plume* of "Brooksby"—towards the end of the Nineteenth Century—perhaps came the nearest to filling his place; but, in my opinion, there was never a man who combined a knowledge of horses and fox-hunting with the ability to put that knowledge on paper who was in his class.

No word-picture that I could possibly paint would even approach "Nimrod's" description of hunting in Leicestershire about 1825. In *The Chase, the Turf, and the Road*, his description of a day with the Quorn Hounds, then under the Mastership of "Squire" Osbaldeston, in the year 1826, is a classic:—

"It is a hackneyed enough remark, that both ancient and modern writers make sad work of it when they attempt a description of heaven. To describe a run with foxhounds is a not much easier task; but to make the attempt with any other county than Leicestershire in our eyes, would be giving a chance away. Let us then suppose ourselves to have been at Ashby Pasture, in the Quorn country, with Mr. Osbaldeston's hounds, in the year 1826, when that pack was at the height of its well-merited celebrity. Let us also indulge ourselves with a fine morning, in the first week of February, and at least two hundred well-mounted men by the cover's side. Time being called—say a quarter past eleven, nearly our great-grandfather's dinner hour—the hounds approach the furze-brake, or the gorse, as it is called in that region. 'Hark in, hark!' with a slight cheer, and perhaps

one wave of his cap, says Mr. Osbaldeston, who long hunted his own pack, and in an instant he has not a hound at his horse's heels. In a very short time the gorse appears shaken in various parts of the cover—apparently from an unknown cause, not a single hound being for some minutes visible. Presently one or two appear, leaping over some old furze which they cannot push through, and exhibit to the field their skins and spotted sides. 'Oh you beauties!' exclaims some old Meltonian, rapturously fond of the sport. Two minutes more elapse; another hound slips out of cover, and takes a short turn outside, with his nose to the ground and his stern lashing his sides—thinking, no doubt, he might touch on a drag, should Reynard have been abroad in the night. Hounds have no business to *think*, *thinks* the second whipper-in, who observes him; but one crack of his whip, with 'Rasselas, Rasselas, where are you going? Rasselas? *Get to cover, Rasselas;*' and Rasselas immediately disappears. Five minutes more pass away. 'No fox here,' says one; 'don't be in a hurry,' cries Mr. Cradock; 'they are drawing it beautifully, and there is rare lying in it.' These words are scarcely uttered, when the cover shakes more than ever. Every stem appears alive, and it reminds us of a corn-field waving in the wind. In two minutes the sterns of some more hounds are seen 'flourishing' above the gorse. '*Have at him there,*' holloas the Squire—the gorse still more alive and hounds leaping over each other's backs. '*Have at him there again,* my good hounds; a fox for a hundred!' reiterates the Squire; putting his finger in his ear, and uttering a scream which, not being set to music, we cannot give here. Jack Stevens—the first whipper-in—looks at his watch. At this moment 'John White,' 'Val. Maher,' 'Frank Holyoake' (who will pardon us for giving them their *noms de chasses*), and two or three more of the fast ones, are seen creeping gently on towards a point at which they think it probable he may break. 'Hold hard there,' says a sportsman; but he might as well speak

to the winds. 'Stand still, gentlemen; *pray* stand still,' exclaims the huntsman; he might as well say so to the sun. During the time we have been speaking of, all the field have been awake—gloves put on—cigars thrown away—the bridle-reins gathered well up into the hand, and hats pushed down upon the brow.

"At this interesting period, a Snob, just arrived from a very *rural* country, and unknown to anyone, but determined to witness the start, gets into a conspicuous situation: 'Come away, Sir,' holloas the master (little suspecting that the Snob may be nothing less than one of the Quarterly Reviewers). 'What mischief are you doing there? Do you think *you* can catch the fox?' A breathless silence ensues. At length a whimper is heard in the cover—like the voice of a dog in a dream: it is Flourisher, and the Squire cheers him to the echo. In an instant a hound challenges—and another—and another. 'Tis enough. Tallyho!' cries the countryman in a tree. 'He's gone,' exclaims Lord Alvanley; and, clapping his spurs to his horse, in an instant is in the front rank.

"As all good sportsmen would say, 'Ware, hounds!' cries Sir Harry Goodricke. 'Give them time,' exclaims Mr. John Moore. 'That's right,' says Mr. Osbaldeston, 'spoil your own sport as usual.' 'Go along,' roars out Mr. Holyoake, 'there are three couple of hounds on the scent.' 'That's your sort,' says 'Billy Coke,' coming up at the rate of thirty miles an hour on *Advance*, with a label pinned on his back, '*He kicks*;'—'the rest are all coming, and there's a rare scent to-day, I'm sure.' Bonaparte's Old Guard, in its best days, would not have stopped such men as these, so long as life remained in them.

"Only those who have witnessed it can know in what an extraordinary manner hounds that are left behind in a cover make their way through a crowd, and get up to the leading ones of the pack, which have been fortunate in getting away with their fox. It is true, they possess the

speed of a race-horse; still nothing short of their high metal could induce them to thread their way through a body of horsemen going the best pace, with the prospect of being ridden over and maimed at every stride they take. But, as Beckford observes, 'tis the dash of the foxhound which distinguishes him.' A turn, however, in their favour, or a momentary loss of scent in the few hounds that have shot ahead—an occurrence to be looked for on such occasions—joins head and tail together, and the scent being good,—every hound settles to his fox; the pace gradually improves; *vires acquirit eundo; a terrible burst is the result!*

"At the end of nineteen minutes the hounds come to a fault, and for a moment the fox has a chance,—in fact, they have been pressed upon by the horses, and have rather overrun the scent. 'What a pity!' say one. 'What a shame!' cries another; alluding, perhaps, to a young one, who would and could have gone still faster. 'You may thank yourselves for this,' exclaims Osbaldeston, well up at the time, Ashton (afterwards sold to Lord Plymouth for 400 guineas) looking fresh; but only fourteen men of the two hundred are to be counted; all the rest *coming*. At one blast of the horn, the hounds are back to the point at which the scent has failed, Jack Stevens being in his place to turn them. *To doit! Pasitme*, says the Squire, as she feathers her stern down the hedge-row, looking more beautiful than ever. 'She speaks! Worth a thousand, by Jupiter!' cries John White, looking over his left shoulder as he sends both spurs into Euxton, delighted to see only four more of the field are up. Our Snob, however, is amongst them. He has 'gone a good one,' and his countenance is expressive of delight, as he urges his horse to his speed to get again into a front place.

"The pencil of the painter is now wanting; and unless the painter should be a sportsman, even his pencil would be worth little. What a country is before them!—what a panorama does it represent! Not a field of less than forty—



GETTING AWAY

Drawing by Alken in "The Chase, the Turf and the Road"

some a hundred acres—and no more signs of the plough than in the wilds of Siberia. See the hounds in a body that might be covered by a damask tablecloth—every stern down, and every head up, for there is no need of stooping, the scent lying breast high. But the crash!—the music!—how to describe these? Reader, there is no crash now, and not much music. It is the tinker that makes a great noise over a little work, but at the pace these hounds are going there is no time for babbling. Perchance one hound in five may throw his tongue as he goes to inform his comrades, as it were, that the villain is on before them, and most musically do the light notes of *Vocal* and *Venus* fall on the ear of those who may be within reach to catch them. But who is so fortunate in this second burst, nearly as terrible as the first? Our fancy supplies us again, and we think we could name them all. If we look to the left, nearly abreast of the pack, we see six men going gallantly, and quite as straight as the hounds themselves are going; and on the right are four more, riding equally well, though the former have rather the best of it, owing to having had the inside of the hounds at the last two turns, which must be placed to the chapter of accidents. A short way in the rear, by no means too much so to enjoy this brilliant run, are the rest of the *élite* of the field, who had come up at the first check; and a few who, thanks to the goodness of their steeds, and their determination to be with the hounds, appear as if dropped from the clouds. Some, however, begin to show symptoms of distress. Two horses are seen loose in the distance—a report is flying about that one of the field is badly hurt, and something is heard of a collar-bone being broken, others say it is a leg; but the pace is *too good* to inquire. A cracking of rails is now heard, and one gentleman's horse is to be seen resting, neatly balanced, across one of them, his rider being on his back in the ditch, which is on the landing side. 'Who is he?' says Lord Brudenel, to Jack Stevens. 'Can't tell, my Lord; but I thought it was a queerish place when

I came o'er it before him.' It is evidently a case of peril, but the pace is *too good* to afford help.

"Up to this time, 'Snob' has gone quite in the first flight; the 'Dons' begin to eye him, and, when an opportunity offers, the question is asked—'Who is that fellow on the little bay horse?' 'Don't know him,' says Mr. *Little* Gilmour, (a fourteen-stone Scotch man, by-the-by,) ganging gallantly to his hounds—'He can ride,' exclaims Lord Ranccliffe. 'A tip-top provincial, depend upon it,' added Lord Plymouth, going quite at his ease on a thoroughbred nag, three stone above his weight, and in perfect racing trim. Animal nature, however, will cry 'enough,' how good soever she may be, if unreasonable man press her beyond the point. The line of scent lies right athwart a large grass ground (as a field is termed in Leicestershire), somewhat on the ascent; abounding in ant-hills, or hillocks, peculiar to old grazing land, and thrown up by the plough, some hundred years since, into rather high ridges, with deep, holding furrows between each. The fence at the top is impracticable—Meltonicé, 'a stopper'—nothing for it but a gate, leading into a broad green lane, high and strong, with deep, slippery ground on each side of it. 'Now for the timber-jumper,' cries Osbaldeston, pleased to find himself upon Ashton. 'For Heaven's sake, take care of my hounds, in case they may throw up in the lane.' Snob is here in the best of company, and that moment perhaps the happiest of his life; but, not satisfied with his situation, wishing to out-Herod Herod, and have a fine story to tell when he gets home, he pushes to his speed on ground on which all regular Leicestershire men are careful, and the death-warrant of the little bay horse is signed. It is true he gets first to the gate, and has no idea of opening it; sees it contains five new and strong bars, that will neither bend nor break; has a great idea of a fall, but no idea of refusing; presses his hat firmly on his head, and gets his whip-hand at liberty to give the good little nag a refresher; but all at

once he perceives it will not do. When attempting to collect him for the effort, he finds his mouth dead and his neck stiff; fancies he hears something like a wheezing in his throat; and discovering quite unexpectedly that the gate would open, wisely avoids a fall, which was *booked* had he attempted to leap it. He pulls up, then, at the gate; and as he places the hook of his whip under the latch, John White goes over it close to the hinge-post, and Captain Ross, upon Clinker, follows him. The Reviewer then walks through.

"The scene now shifts. On the other side of the lane is a fence of this description: it is a newly plashed hedge, abounding in strong growers, as they are called, and a yawning ditch on the farther side; but, as is peculiar to Leicestershire and Northamptonshire, a considerable portion of the blackthorn, left uncut, leans outwards from the hedge, somewhat about breast-high. This last fence is taken by all now with the hounds—some to the right and some to the left of the direct line; but the little bay horse would have no more of it. Snob puts him twice at it, and manfully too; but the wind is out of him, and he has no power to rise. Several scrambles, but only one fall, occur at this 'rasper,' all having nearly enough of the killing pace; and a mile and a half farther, the second horses are fallen in with, just in the nick of time. A short check from the stain of sheep makes everything comfortable; and, the Squire having hit off his fox like a workman, thirteen men, out of two hundred, are fresh mounted, and with the hounds, which settle to the scent again at a truly killing pace.

"*'Hold Hard, Holyoake!'* exclaims Mr. Osbaldeston (now mounted on Clasher), knowing what double-quick time he would be marching to, with fresh pipes to play upon, and the crowd well shaken off; '*pray* don't press 'em too hard, and we shall be sure to kill our fox. *Have at him there*, Abigail and Fickle, good bitches—see what a head they are carrying! I'll bet a thousand they kill him.' The

country appears better and better, 'he's taking a capital line,' exclaims Sir Harry Goodricke, as he points out to Sir James Musgrave two young Furrier hounds, who are particularly distinguishing themselves at the moment. 'Worth a dozen Reform Bills,' shouts Sir Francis Burdett, sitting erect upon Sampson, and putting his head straight at a yawner. 'We shall have the Whissendine brook,' cries Mr. Maher, who knows every field in the country, 'for he is making straight for Teigh.' 'And a bumper too, after last night's rain,' holloas Captain Berkeley, determined to get first to four stiff rails in a corner. 'So much the better,' says Lord Albanley, 'I like a bumper at all times.' 'A fig for the Whissendine,' cries Lord Gardner; 'I am on the best water-jumper in my stable.'

"The prophecy turns up. Having skirted Ranksborough Gorse, the villain has nowhere to stop short of Woodwell-head cover, which he is pointing for; and in ten minutes, or less, the brook appears in view. It is even with its banks, and, as

'Smooth glides the water where the brook is deep,'

its deepness was pretty certain to be fathomed.

"'Yooi, OVER he goes!' holloas the Squire, as he perceives Joker and Jewell plunging into the stream, and Red-rose shaking herself on the opposite bank. Seven men, out of thirteen, take it in their stride; three stop short, their horses refusing the first time, but come well over the second; and three find themselves in the middle of it. The gallant 'Frank Forester' is among the latter; and having been requested that morning to wear a friend's new red coat, to take off the gloss and glare of the shop, he accomplishes the task to perfection in the bluish-black mud of the Whissendine, only then subsiding after a three days' flood. 'Who is that under his horse in the brook?' inquires that good sportsman and fine rider, Mr. Green, of Rolleston,



WISSENDINE BROOK. MILTON MOWBRAY.
Did any fly them in The Chase, the Hunt and the Road?

whose noted old mare has just skimmed over the water like a swallow on a summer's evening. 'It's Middleton Biddulph,' says one. 'Pardon me,' cries Mr. Middleton Biddulph: 'Middleton Biddulph is here, *and here he means to be!*' 'Only Dick Christian,' answers Lord Forester, 'and it is nothing new to him.' 'But he'll be drowned,' exclaims Lord Kinnaird. 'I shouldn't wonder,' observes Mr. William Coke. But the pace is *too good* to inquire.

"The fox does his best to escape: he threads hedgerows, tries the outbuildings of a farm-house, and once turns so short as nearly to run his foil; but—the perfection of the thing—the hounds turn shorter than he does, as much as to say—*die you shall*. The pace has been awful for the last twenty minutes. Three horses are blown to a stand-still, and few are going at their ease. 'Out upon this great carcase of mine! No horse that was ever foaled can live under it at this pace and over this country,' says one of the best of the welter-weights, as he stands over his four-hundred-guinea chestnut, then rising from the ground after giving him a heavy fall—his tail nearly erect in the air, his nostrils violently distended, and his eye almost fixed. 'Not hurt, I hope,' exclaims Mr. Maxse, to *somebody* whom he gets a glimpse of through the openings of a tall quickset hedge which is between them, coming neck and croup into the adjoining field, from the top bar of a high, hog-backed stile. His eye might have been spared the unpleasing sight, had not his ear been attracted to a sort of *procumbit-humi-bos* sound of a horse falling to the ground on his back, the bone of his left hip indenting the greensward within two inches of his rider's thigh. It is young Peyton, who, having missed his second horse at the check, had been going nearly half the way in distress; but from nerve and pluck, perhaps peculiar to Englishmen in the hunting field, but very peculiar to himself, got within three fields of the end of this brilliant run. The fall was all but a certainty; for it was the third stiff timber-fence that had so unfortunately

opposed him, after his horse's wind had been pumped out by the pace; but he was too good to refuse them, and his horse knew better than to do so.

"The Aeneid of Virgil ends with a death, and a chase is not complete without it. The fox dies within half a mile of Woolwell-head cover, evidently his point from the first; the pack pulling him down in the middle of a large grass field, every hound but one at his brush. Jack Stevens with him in his hands would be a subject worthy of Edwin Landseer himself: a blackthorn, which has laid hold of his cheek, has besmeared his upper garments with blood, and one side of his head and cap are cased in mud, by a fall he has had in a lane, his horse having alighted in the ruts from a high flight of rails; but he has ridden the same horse throughout the run, and has handled him so well that he could have gone two miles farther, if the chase had been continued so long. Osbaldeston's who-hoop might have been heard to Cottesmore, had the wind set in that direction, and every man present is ecstatic with delight. 'Quite the cream of the thing, I suppose,' says Lord Gardner, a very promising young one, at this time fresh in Leicestershire. 'The cream of everything in the shape of fox-hunting,' observes that excellent sportsman, Sir James Musgrave, looking at that moment at his watch. 'Just ten miles, as the crow flies, in one hour and two minutes, with but two trifling checks, over the finest country in the world. *What superb hounds are these!*' added the Baronet, as he turned his horse's head to the wind. 'You are right,' says Colonel Lowther, 'they are perfect. I wish my father had seen them do their work to-day.' Some of the field now come up, who could not live in the first flight; but as there is no jealousy here, they congratulate each other on the fine day's sport, and each man turns his head towards home."

What a description of a day's sport! Certainly no one has ever told the story of a run so vividly; though "Brooksby" attempted to tell of his day with the Meadow Brook,

on Long Island, New York, almost a hundred years later, in much the same way—and perhaps came nearer to it than anyone in modern times. But it seems to me that “Nimrod” paints a better picture of sport in England at that time than anyone. He must have been a strange man, an extraordinary combination of charm and overbearing conceit, which made him at times appear imperious, officious, and often insufferably aggressive.

Speaking of him, a friend says: “He was one of the most fascinating persons I ever saw; his figure perfect, light, and active, his features handsome, his complexion clear and glowing with health, contrasted with his dark closely-curling hair, and eyes that sparkled with intelligence and humour; his countenance beaming with good nature and gaiety; he was truly a *sunny* person; always prompt to oblige and promote the pleasure of his friends; full of harmless fun and humour; much readiness in conversation, with observation of character, and the sort of descriptive power that has been recognised in his writings.”

Certainly, the portrait by Daniel Maclise, R.A., painted in 1836, now in the possession of Sir John Murray, K.C.V.O., gives one the impression that the fascination which he exercised over everyone with whom he came in contact—from the labourers in the fields to the noble Masters with whom he hunted—was irresistible.

Lord Willoughby de Broke says of him that, from the point of view of hunting history, his writings were invaluable, but that, if he had contented himself with noting and chronicling the things that he saw and understood, his work would have been purer and sounder. But, in spite of Lord Willoughby's criticism, I feel that no one has given us as good a picture of hunting in the times in which he lived. He visited nearly every hunting country in England and not a few in Scotland and those parts of Wales where fox-hunting was in an embryonic state. Travel was not easy in those days; there were no railways, and trans-

portation was entirely by coach; but "Nimrod" went everywhere—often riding many miles before and after a long day in the field. His arrangements with the publishers of the magazines for which he wrote were very favourable to him; but he was an extravagant man and he died a very poor one. It might perhaps be interesting to note the way that hunting was carried on from Melton, whence one could reach the meets of four packs of hounds in those days:—

The little town furnished an interesting scene on each hunting morning. At rather an early hour one might see groups of hunters, the finest in the world, setting out in different directions to meet different packs of hounds. Each sportsman sent forward two. On one was mounted a very light extremely well-dressed lad, who returned home on his master's cover hack, or in the dicky of his carriage, if he happened to go to cover in the more luxurious fashion. On the other hunter was a personage of a very different description, who was known as a "second horseman;" he rode the second horse, which was to carry his master with his hounds, after his having had one, or part of one, chase on the first. This description of servant was by no means easy to procure; and he generally exhibited, so we are told, a demeanour which indicated that he was fully aware of his own importance. Such a man had to have brains in his head; be a good horseman, with a light hand; be able to ride well to hounds; and, above all, he must have a good eye to, and a thorough knowledge of, a country, to enable him to give his master a chance of changing his horse in a run, and not merely when it was over. Lord Sefton brought this second-horse system into fashion at the time he hunted Leicestershire, when Jack Raven, a light weight, and son of his huntsman, the celebrated John Raven, huntsman to the still more celebrated Mr. Meynell, used to ride one of his thousand-guinea hunters in his wake—to use a nautical expression—in the field, to which he changed his seat at the first convenient opportunity. The system, however, has

been improved upon since then. The second horseman now rides to points, instead of following the hounds, and thus often meets his master at a most favourable moment, when his good steed is sinking, with one that has not been out of a trot. "There was much humanity," says "Nimrod," "as well as comfort, in this arrangement; for at the pace that hounds now go over grass countries, horses become somewhat distressed under heavy weights in a short time after the chase begins, when the scent lies well, and they are manfully ridden up to the pack."

About an hour and a half after the servants had gone forward with the hunters a change of scene could be observed at Melton. Carriages and four appeared at some doors; at others very clever thoroughbred hacks, led gently in hand, ready for their owners to mount. The by-roads of this county being bad for wheels, the hack was often the better conveyance of the two—always, indeed, unless the fixture was at a place on, or not far from, a turnpike-road; and twelve or fourteen miles was often performed by him within the hour.

"The *style* of your Meltonian foxhunter has long distinguished him above his brother of what he calls a *provincial* chase," says "Nimrod." "When turned out at the hands of his valet, he presents the very *beau-ideal* of his *caste*. The exact Stultze-like fit of his coat, his superlatively well-cleaned leather breeches and boots, and the generally apparent high breeding of the man, can seldom be matched elsewhere; and the most cautious sceptic on such points would satisfy himself of this fact at one single inspection."

It was, however, reserved to Mr. Meynell to render famous the county of Leicester as a hunting country. He was, doubtless, the most successful sportsman of his own time, nor has he been surpassed by any who have trodden in his steps. He was a man of strong and vigorous mind, joined with much perseverance, as well as ardour in his favourite pursuit, and bringing faculties to bear upon sport,

as a *science*, which would have distinguished themselves in any walk of life to which he might have applied them. As a breeder of hounds he displayed a perfect judgment: the first qualities he looked for were fine noses and stout running; a combination of strength with beauty, and steadiness with high metal. Although he did not hunt his hounds himself, yet he was one of the boldest, as well as most judicious horseman of his time; but this was only a minor qualification. His knowledge of hunting was supreme, and several of his maxims are in force to the present day. He was a great advocate for not hurrying hounds in their work; and having, perhaps, unparalleled influence over his field, he was enabled to prevent his brother sportsmen from pressing on the hounds when in difficulties—himself being the first to keep aloof: in chase, no man rode harder.

It is interesting to learn that during Meynell's day hard riding—or perhaps one might say *quick* riding to hounds—first came into vogue. It is difficult in these days to realise that the foxhunters of the Eighteenth Century did not, most of them, ride straight across country, and were unaccustomed to train their horses to jump fences and ditches and other natural and unnatural boundaries which existed between enclosures, in the manner which prevailed afterwards. The horses were not fit; they were not clipped—as they are to-day—and I think that is one of the reasons why the runs in many parts of England—particularly in the less cultivated, more provincial countries—were slower and longer. “Nimrod” tells us that Mr. Childe of Kinlet Hall, Shropshire—a great personal friend of Mr. Meynell's—is said to have been the first to set the example of riding straight; which was quickly followed by the leading personalities of the Quorn Hunt.

It would be quite impossible were I to attempt to give an account of “Nimrod's” comments on the famous packs which he visited and described during the times in which

he lived; but I will mention a few of the more important ones. He says:—

“Perhaps the oldest foxhound blood in England at this time is to be found in the kennel of The Earl of Lonsdale, at Cottesmore. The Noels, whom this family succeeded, were of ancient standing in the chase; and the venerable peer himself has now superintended the pack for nearly fifty years, with a short inter-regnum of three or four years, when Sir Gilbert Heathcote had them. Lord Yarborough’s kennel can likewise boast of very old blood, that pack having descended, without interruption, from father to son for upwards of one hundred and fifty years.

“The hounds, late Mr. Warde’s, sold to Mr. Horlock a few years since for two thousand guineas, claim a high descent, having much of the blood of Lord Thanet’s and Mr. Elwes’s packs, which were in the possession of the Abingdon family, at Rycot, for at least three generations, and hunted Oxfordshire and Berkshire. Mr. Warde was a master of foxhounds during, as we believe, the yet unequalled period of fifty-seven years in succession. During this time he sold his pack to Lord Spencer; but reserved three couple of bitches, from which he raised another pack, and thus never lost sight of his old blood.”

“Nimrod” goes on to mention the Belvoir, the Duke of Beaufort’s, Earl Fitzwilliam’s, Mr. Foljambe’s, the Duke of Grafton’s, and many others; and then says: that “packs of English foxhounds have changed masters so often within the last fifty years that it is very difficult to trace them—either in blood or possession.”

I have mentioned “Nimrod” as being, at times, “imperious and insufferably aggressive.” I think the following comment on the character of the Duke of Beaufort, which appeared in a number of *The New Sporting Magazine* illustrates my remark: “Yet it is as a master of foxhounds, that it is within my province to speak of the late Duke of Beaufort; and, from the many years’ experience I had of

his Grace in the field, I feel myself in some measure competent to the task. I need scarcely say I was always an admirer of his hounds, although I could not like his country. The gradual improvement I saw in the former, in defiance of all the disadvantages of the latter, convinced me that there was a system at work highly worthy of my consideration—a directing hand *somewhere* which must eventually lead to perfection. But whence this directing hand I was for a long time unable to discover. I doubted it being that of the Duke, not from a mistrust of his capacity, but because I had reason to believe the numerous avocations of his station prevented his attending to the minutiae of a kennel;—although I did not consider his Grace a sportsman of the *very first class*, in which his hounds certainly stood. I doubted it being that of Philip Payne, his huntsman, for, to appearance, a duller bit of clay was never moulded by Nature. But we should not judge from appearances, and I lived to confess my error. There was about Philip a steady observance of *circumstances*, which, increasing with the experience of their results, was more useful to him, as a breeder of foxhounds, than the learning and talent of a Porson. His observation alone taught him that, in seeking to produce excellence in animals, we have the best prospect of success in the election of those to breed from which have individually exhibited the peculiar qualities we require from them. Having availed ourselves of those in a kennel, a combination of strength and symmetry—which we call beauty—produces the perfect hound, at least as nearly so as the somewhat imperfect law of nature will allow us.”

Now, in the first place, my perusal of the works of other writers dealing with the history of the Badminton Hounds at that time, leads me to form a very different opinion regarding the sportsmanlike qualifications of the 6th Duke of Beaufort, who, although a very busy man, was certainly not deserving of the impertinent criticism meted out to

him by "Nimrod," who was his guest in the hunting field. But I am afraid that this sort of thing was characteristic of the man, whose self-esteem assumed very great proportions towards the end of his career. "Nimrod" died in London on May 19th, 1843, from peritonitis, brought on, it is believed, as the result of a serious accident which he had suffered in France, where he had been living for some time.

It may be remembered that among the outstanding personalities in the hunting world of the late Eighteenth Century, whom I have mentioned in Chapter II., was Peter Beckford, who, though he could hardly be numbered among the great Masters, was nevertheless the author of a book which has been handed down from generation to generation as the text-book which all hunting men should read—I might almost say, commit to memory—from beginning to end. Peter Beckford's little country in Dorsetshire was not a good one. There were few notable personalities in his Field; and yet, as a teacher and as a writer on fox-hunting, he stood alone. He died on February 18th, 1811. One of Beckford's neighbours—he lived near Blandford, on the River Stour—was old James Farquharson, who had come to live in the country in 1775, and died there twenty years later. The widow Farquharson had a son, James John, to whom his father had left a great estate at Langton, just across the river from Littleton Manor, where she lived. Young Farquharson, during his sojourn at Oxford University, had hunted with John Warde, whose kennels were near Oxford, and when he came back to Blandford what more natural than that he should have wanted to establish a pack of his own with which to hunt the surrounding country. Peter Beckford was not at that time an active Master of Hounds. He had spent many years abroad, and his finances were moreover at a low ebb, but he was glad to give advice to the son of his old friend, and there is in existence a copy of his book—*Thoughts on Hunting*—inscribed to young Farquharson—an interesting link

between the sportsmen of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries.

Dorsetshire is not a great hunting country—it cannot be compared with the Leicestershire about which “Nimrod” wrote so delightfully—but it is, and was at that time, a first-class sporting country. There were plenty of foxes, and one must not forget Beckford’s remark, that in the country in which he lived most of the gentlemen were sportsmen. Small wonder then that the new pack prospered, the fields grew in numbers, and presently the fame of the Master spread until he became known as “The Meynell of the West.”

By 1835 the pack had gained a national reputation, and so it happened that Surtees came down to Dorsetshire to see for himself what sort of sport was going on there. Writing under the pseudonym of “Yorkshireman,” he says: “There is no County in England, that has had more written about it, and yet of which a stranger can form so slight an idea of its sporting pretensions and capabilities, from what has been said, than Dorsetshire. Mr. Beckford would appear to have set an example rigidly followed by subsequent writers, for, though he says the country he hunted was composed of three different sorts, I do not recollect that, in the course of his letters, he ever mentions specifically what County those three sorts were situated in; and though, for this many a day, we have had details innumerable, not only of the straightforward progress of old Reynard himself, but also of the devious windings of poor pussy, yet the writers invariably confine themselves to the names of the points they respectively made for, and to their opinions of the packs, their Masters and management, as though all people were equally acquainted with the country, style of the establishments, etc., with themselves. ‘Nimrod,’ ‘I believe, never hunted in it and, in a volume lately published, containing the pith of his *Hunting Tours*, all the mention I find made of Mr. Farquharson’s hounds consists of a look

he had at them one day when he overtook them at exercise in summer, as he rode off the Blandford Racecourse.

"My ideas of Dorsetshire had been entirely derived from hearsay, from the stories (and stories they very often proved) of people who perhaps were indebted to someone else for their information, or from others who, having no model whereby they may contrast things, are well contented to believe that that which they themselves feel personally, is the very best. I expected to find Mr. Farquharson's country crawling with foxes, streaming in all directions like ropes of sand—as the poacher said of the hares; to see hounds chopping one about every half-hour, and old Ben's cap off half a dozen times in the day, collecting half-crowns for the exploit, in the manner of the old Brighton Muggers. As for the country itself, I expected to find it a desperately mountainous, bad, provincial one, full of impassable ravines, immense woods, high banks with hedges on the top, and yawning drains. Of the mountainous nature of it, I could have little doubt, having heard of the exploits of Mr. Harding's Mountain Harriers, so frequently proclaimed.

"About ten o'clock one night in the early part of December last—I forget the exact date—I found myself turned out of the Weymouth coach at Blandford, and having transferred myself and my traps into a yellow post-chaise, I set out for Bloxworth House, the hospitable mansion of Colonel Lethbridge, for which place I had started some horses a few days previously. After rattling a few miles along the Dorchester road, the line suddenly diverged up a country lane to the left and, after passing through divers fields, commons and opens, and winding about the fortuous by-roads, which all countrymen delight to follow, I found myself sitting on an open down, over which the road declined tracking. The post-boy, who got off to open a gate, now came past the window to resume his seat, and I hailed him to ask if he was sure he was right. 'O yez, Zur,' he said, for he had a touch of Zummerzetzshire twang about

him, 'it be all right—these be Bloxworth Downs and the House be just over the hill before us; these'ere white heaps you zee marks the road—they be what we calls Dorsetshire mileztones.'

"I looked out of the window on the right, and by the light of the moon, which gleamed dimly through the passing clouds, I saw small heaps of chalk, laid at intervals of five or six yards apart, which, contrasting with the dark sward of the turf, pointed out the line, and guided us over the downs, bringing us ultimately to the door of Bloxworth House, a roomy, old-fashioned, family mansion, the property of Mr. Pickard, situated near Woodbury Hill, the site of a great annual horse fair.

"Of all the countries I have ever been in, Dorsetshire is the most difficult for a stranger to find his way about. Finger-posts there are none; downs, with their 'Dorsetshire milestones' stretch about in all directions, and the cross-roads, over the bleak and barren heaths, are puzzling beyond description. My line to cover this morning gave me a good insight into the nature of part of the country, and, had I not had a good pilot in Colonel Lethbridge, who has lived and hunted in the country for many years, I could never have found my way there at all.

"Came House, my destination, I believe, is one of the show meets of Mr. Farquharson's Hounds; at all events, it is a favourite one, as it lets in the Weymouth and Dorchester people, and, moreover, is in an open country. Notwithstanding the unpropitious state of the morning—a drizzling rain, with fog, having accompanied us to cover,—there was an immense assemblage in the Park, though probably the weather on that side of the country had been more favourable than it had been with us, for the sun began to make efforts to break through just as we arrived. After passing innumerable servants with horses on the carriage road, and making our way through a goodly collection of scarlet coats, that had congregated in the Park, we met the

hounds, coming over the slope of the hill, and Ben, stopping his horse, gave me an opportunity of looking him and them over. He was precisely the sort of person I had pictured to myself he would be. An extremely clean, respectable-looking old man, with his white hair peeping out from the sides of his black cap, with a good intelligent eye and the mildest, most placid, expression of countenance I ever beheld. Ben Jennings is, in fact, an exceedingly fine-looking old fellow, and I know of no servant in England with a more respectable and prepossessing exterior. The other veteran of the establishment, Solomon, was not out this morning, being on the sick list, but he showed up a day or two after, at Ilsington Wood, and I will fill up his description here, as if he had been present. He is a taller man than Ben, with a long grave face, white hair, and not so much of the sportsman in appearance as I expected; still, I believe, he is keen, and I saw him exert himself tremendously one day in trying to whip a fox out of a very thick gorse, somewhere near Chetterwood. The second whipper-in is Ben's son and, like Sally Brown's sweetheart, his Christian name is Tom. He is a sharp, dashing fellow and a fine horseman. The only peculiarity I remarked in their costume was that they all wore long brown leather knee-caps, nearly covering the boot-top and reaching above the knee. I have seen servants in other countries, where they have large deep woodlands to contend with, wear them—though they are but slow things in appearance.

"The hounds, I believe, were purchased by Mr. Farquharson, some thirty years ago, from Mr. Humphrey Sturt of Critchell (ancestor of the present Mr. Sturt, who is one of the Members for the County), who succeeded Mr. Beckford, and are fine large muscular animals, larger-headed, heavier, and more 'John Wardeish'—if I may use the expression—in appearance than the generality of fox-hounds in the present day, but with a very businesslike appearance about them. There were fully two hundred well-

mounted horsemen in the field, the majority of them in scarlet, and nearly all wearing the uniform of the Hunt—viz.; white collars to their coats and ‘F’ on the buttons; while the show of beauty among the fair sex on horseback, and in the numerous carriages, was such as would have done honour to Leicestershire itself. Indeed the whole thing was highly creditable to the sporting character of Dorsetshire, and showed that the gentry still retained the character given them by Mr. Beckford.

“On this day, Mr. Tobyn gave a sumptuous breakfast to the whole field, and I find that similar hospitality is exhibited in all parts of the County. Among the great workmen out on this day was the celebrated Mr. Tatchell, allowed by all to be one of the very boldest, if not *the* boldest, rider in England. For a short period, he figured in the list of Masters of Foxhounds hunting part of the country now occupied by his friend, Mr. Hall. He is an awful weight on a horse, standing nearly six feet high, large limbed and of amazing strength, but, notwithstanding this disadvantage, no man in the country can beat him; and, in the course of a severe run, he takes every opportunity of easing his horses, which are trained to follow him over gates, or Dorsetshire stiles, or any fence that he takes on foot, though it is chiefly at timber where he saves them, by jumping off as he approaches and vaulting over it with one hand, while with the other he puts his horse at it. Having mentioned Dorsetshire stiles, I may observe that they are a species peculiar to this country; at least, I have never seen them in any other; and are built of large, substantial, sawn deal planks, nearly as large as what are used in flooring a room, set into posts, but easily taken down by the hand, by pushing them a little back at one end. At first sight, however, to a stranger, they are rather formidable-looking things, and, of course, when talking of the difficulties of their country, the Dorsetians generally insinuate that no one thinks of displacing the timber; though I soon found that the top bars were

speedily dropped, making the leap a mere trifle; for it is the *stiffness* of the timber (like Snob's 'new-made gate that would neither break nor bend') and not the *height* of the jump, that makes the place difficult. These are to be found in almost every enclosure, and are generally taken by the field in preference to the hedge."

Mr. Surtees does not seem to have had a very good day, judging from the point of view of sport but somehow, I am under the impression that he was as much, if not more interested in a study of the people who made up the field. One never hears that he was a brilliant horseman, or that he went hard during a run, or that he was particularly interested in the hounds or their breeding. He was, as I have already implied, more a student of the people who hunted, than of the sport itself. He must have had a good opportunity that day, for he has given us sketches of many of the famous personalities who were out—the Reverend "Billy" Butler, one of the best-known "Sporting Parsons" of all time; Lord Ilchester, whom he describes as a great sportsman though "past the age to which one looks for deeds of daring;" and several other men of note in the West Country. Of Mr. Farquharson himself he says: "Mr. Farquharson has now hunted Dorsetshire nearly thirty years, during the whole of which period, he has kept his establishment on a large and magnificent scale, without taking one farthing of subscription, there not even being a fund for defraying damage. In the field, he leaves the hounds almost entirely to the management of their huntsmen, and his bearing and manner, while wholly free from anything like aristocratic *hauteur*, is strongly marked with the generous feeling of the sportsman and the frank openness of the English gentleman. Indeed, I think, without flattery, that Mr. Farquharson may well be held up as a model of his order. He resides nearly the whole year upon his estate, spending his large income in the County whence he draws it; promoting the amusement of his friends and

neighbours, at no insignificant cost, and exercising all the public duties, private virtues, and acts of benevolence that inspire the respect and secure the affections of the lower orders; all of which attributes were once more characteristic of the opulent English country gentleman than, I regret to say, we find them at the present day."

So wrote Surtees—that brilliant writer and critic, who is never sparing of caustic remarks about those deserving of them, no matter who they were. No one reading this description of the Farquharson establishment, and of the character of the old Squire himself, can fail to be impressed by the fact that his personality must have been a very delightful one—a conclusion justified by the affectionate respect with which his name is mentioned in Dorsetshire to-day—a hundred years later.

Looking back to the early days of the Nineteenth Century, I am struck by the fact that the wars in which England was engaged had no detrimental effect on the uninterrupted progress of fox-hunting. At no time in its history has the sport flourished more brilliantly or been carried on in a more luxurious manner than in the period which we have just described, and yet it was in that period that England was engaged in one of its most bitter struggles—and was even threatened with invasion. Englishmen have always taken their sport with them no matter under what circumstances or in what country they may find themselves, and in no sport is this truer than of fox-hunting—as history shows. In those countries overseas which have been colonised by Englishmen we find fox-hunting firmly established—as for example Canada, the early beginnings of which have already been touched upon—and India, where there are more than a score of packs regularly maintained, to say nothing of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DESCENDANT OF A GREAT HUNTING CORRESPONDENT TELLS THE STORY OF WELSH HUNTING

ALTHOUGH WALES, with an area of approximately one-seventh of Great Britain, has been an integral part of the Kingdom since the Twelfth Century, its topography is, to a great extent, very different from that of most of England. Moreover, the inhabitants of the two countries did not spring from a common tap-root, and even now there are a great many parts of Wales where Welsh, and not English, is the common language. Fox-hunting in both countries had its beginnings at about the same time; but, as in the case of America, progress was not anything like so rapid as in England. But, while the procedure may be said to be very like that of America, and the system of hunting, even to-day, is very much the same in many parts of both countries, the type of hound developed differs in many respects.

Because the infiltration of Welsh blood into many packs in both England and America has had a very considerable influence on the type of foxhound produced, it seems to me that the system of fox-hunting in Wales must occupy an important place in the story of two hundred years of the sport. Mr. Edwin Wathen Price, in that interesting book, *Horn and Hound in Wales*, tells us that the system of hunting followed in the early days has altered greatly, and that it is only in the roughest and wildest countries that the sport is actually carried on in the old-fashioned—and what he calls “legitimate”—way, in which a fox that is really a *wild animal* is found in the old manner, viz.: “an early tryst; and a drag hit and followed by the staunch

hounds of the pack; the main body being in couples, and not released till the fox is trailed to its lair (I suppose he means to the spot where he has been lying up) and afoot.

“ ‘The hounds are uncoupled, see yonder they fly,
They have a strong scent, and are all in full cry.’

“Then the music of the pack and cheers of the Huntsman are joy beyond description:

“ ‘Hark, what loud shouts
Re-echo through the groves! He breaks away;
Shrill horn proclaims his flight; each struggling hound
streams o’er the wood to reach the distant pack;
’Tis triumph all and joy.’ ”

Mr. Price evidently had a pretty poor opinion of the system of hunting carried on in many parts of England, for he says: “In the Midlands and among modern men a less inciting and excitable method is adopted, and we have muteness and speed as a *sine qua non* of the chase, forty-minute-bursts, without music, or even a holloa—like steeplechasing to a drag.”

But I am attempting to deal with the development of hunting and hounds in Wales, and though the tirade of criticism in Mr. Price’s book—some of it from the columns of the sporting papers, some of it from individual letters—is interesting as showing the reaction of those “die-hards” who preferred the ancient system to the more modern one, it does not seem to me worth while to quote them in detail. From the same source I gather that there were approximately 125 packs of hounds—harriers and foxhounds—kennelled in Wales between the years 1830 and 1885. Of these, some 35 packs hunted fox only and were typical Welsh Foxhounds. The rest were Harriers, of one sort or another, which in a great many cases hunted both fox and hare, and more often than not, otter as well.

Luckily for seekers after knowledge of Welsh hunting during the Nineteenth Century, there was one man—Captain Newton Wynne Apperley, a grandson of the famous “Nimrod”—who inherited from him all of his love of hunting and much of his ability to describe what he saw, to whom we can turn. Captain Apperley, though born in Australia early in the Nineteenth Century, came to live in Wales when his father succeeded to the estate of Morben in 1856. He was intended for the Army, but his diary tells us that, although his three elder brothers went to India, he was kept at home to be a companion to his father, who consoled him for his disappointment by promising him that one day he should have a pack of hounds of his own. After leaving school he kept a careful diary, and it is from the entries in this that I have quoted freely, as it seems to me that it gives a very good idea of hunting in the mountainous regions in those days.

Morben was a Sixteenth Century house, with walls five feet thick, situated some 13 miles from Aberystwyth, where Colonel Pryse’s Foxhounds—the Gogerddan—were kennelled. The salt marshes about Morben were a favourite feeding-ground for the native brown hare, the pursuit of which seems to have been considered excellent training for foxhounds, and the Gogerddan often met at the house. I find a description of a hunt from there on January 28th, 1870, which runs as follows:—

“Went out at 6.00 a.m. on foot. Very hard frost. Drew all the rocks blank and found in Darren-ty-n-maen, and ran to ground in Brwyno. Time three-quarters of an hour. Dug from half-past three till half-past seven, an hour and a half by candle-light, and killed him, the largest fox I, or Ned, or anybody out, ever saw. All the farmers declared that he was the fox that killed the sheep, as there was always the mark of a broken tush on them, which this fox had. ‘Riot’ and ‘Challenger’ got fast in the drain; and were very near killed. ‘Dick,’ the terrier, got up to him, but he

was so bitten by a fox too strong for him, that in a few days, he died. I have the head at home, stuffed by Captain Cosens, of Ynyshire. We were obliged to kill him, as the farmers swore *they* would kill him, if they had to dig till morning. We had to borrow a lantern to bring the hounds home over the mountain, it was pitch dark. A tremendous long and hard day's work. The drain was about five feet under the surface, and we had to make nine openings before we got him."

About a year later—on January 17th, 1871—I find an entry telling of another day behind the Gogerddan Foxhounds: "We left Glandovey," the writer says, "at seven a.m. for Peithyll by train, and took ten couple of hounds out. I rode Colonel Pryse's grey mare, and Dick whipped-in on old Barton. Drew Pantglas Wenfrwyd, Tyn-y-veddi and Garth and Ny-llwyd all blank. Hit on the drag of a disturbed fox above Ny-llwyd and rounded Moel Llyn, when by the sudden burst, I fancy they must have got close up to him in the rocks. Back by Ny-llwyd and Garri-cwm and lost just above the dingle. But the hounds had checked some time, by the time I got up to them, as Dick, young Pryse and myself had only been riding by the sound; for it came on a very heavy, driving snowstorm, and we could not see a hundred yards before us. It being night on the open mountains, we all came to grief in the bog, poor little Pryse getting two corking rollers into bogs, which rather frightened him, and I had to keep with him till we got off the mountain, in case he should lose himself. But when once off the mountain he was precious glad to trace his steps homewards, wet through. The hills were very dangerous to ride, there being sufficient snow to cover the ground, so there was no chance of seeing either bogs or rocks, both of which abound on Ny-llwyd Hills. I, on the grey mare, came to grief on some ice in the lane going to Garth Wood. The mare came down on her head while galloping, and in trying to keep my seat I hurt my spine very much, which

caused me great pain in the back and kidneys for a month or more. Doctor Gilbertson saw me, by Colonel Pryse's orders, and gave me physic, which relieved the pain a good deal. The mare only slightly barked one knee. I lost Dick about Moel Llyn, and didn't see him till I was taking hounds home through Talybont. I was out nine hours from the kennels. Col. Pryse thought I had broke all the hounds' necks over the rocks from my being out so long. Never saw hounds go faster over snow."

How similar this to a day which I had myself with the Brecon, some sixty years later, when that pack, composed almost entirely of Welsh Hounds, was hunted by that knowledgeable houndman, Captain J. D. D. Evans, of Ffrwdgrech. I had been staying at Itton Court, and, after a most lovely trip by motor, we reached Brecon about one o'clock and went on to Ffrwdgrech, where we were welcomed by Captain and Mrs. Evans and their many children. The trip from Chepstow I shall long remember. It was a perfect day, and the country we passed through was very beautiful and wild, up the valley of the Usk River, most of the way. I found the Brecon Hounds, which we saw in kennel that afternoon, a workmanlike but a very uneven lot; for Captain Evans had a typical Welsh pack, which lacks the family likeness one finds in Sir Edward Curre's.

The next day we hunted, leaving by motor for a ten o'clock meet some ten or twelve miles from kennels. There were not many people at the meet—perhaps a dozen at the outside—mostly farmers, mounted on the roughest sort of Welsh ponies. The country over which we hunted was rough, open moorland, and the foxes seemed to lie almost anywhere—among the rocks, or on the hillsides—often in the little swamps that abound, even on the high land. Captain Evans hunted hounds himself and his two Whippers-in, Major Jeffreys and Captain Rees, were both amateurs.

We drew along for about half an hour and then hounds

hit off a line on a bit of open moorland and went away at a good pace, with a grand cry that could be heard for miles. We followed as best we could: the going was pretty rough, but there were no obstacles to jump; and by riding to points we managed to keep hounds in sight at all times, except when they ran down a steep dip in the hills. I was riding a little mare which had been loaned to me by Major Jeffreys—hardly fifteen hands high, and with no great quality—but it seemed to me that she had six legs; she was as sure-footed as a goat, and carried me brilliantly over country that would have put many a Leicestershire hunter down.

Presently hounds ran into the valley below us, but by galloping along on the high ground we could see every move they made. Had our fox not been headed by a shepherd's dog I think we would have had a good run. As it was, he went to ground in about forty minutes, in some rocks, from which we could not dislodge him. It was very pretty to see the work of hounds at the end, after the line had been foiled by the collie and by the Welsh sheep, which seemed to be everywhere; and the work of the pack was wonderful, it seemed to me, and the cry the best I've ever heard.

About two o'clock, we found another dog fox, again on the hills, and had a cracking hunt of over an hour and a half till hounds were finally run out of scent. There were sheep—sheep—sheep—everywhere, and how hounds could do anything at all I don't know, for they were not handled or helped—they did it all themselves. It was the roughest kind of country—those high moorlands—but very beautiful; and I shall never forget sitting on my horse, on a hill overlooking the Wye Valley, with hounds hunting in the wooded dingles and the river winding below us. The air was very clear—there was a man fishing for salmon in the river—and we could almost see him cast, although he must have been more than half a mile from us. That was in the

Spring, in April, of 1930. What hunting must be in the Winter months I can only guess.

One more hunt I shall quote from Captain Apperley's Diary, in September of the year 1875: "I was hunting Colonel Pryse's Foxhounds. Rose at a quarter to six a.m., mounted my grey mare, and took 13 couple of hounds and three terriers to 'Abermade,' the seat of Lewis Pugh Pugh, for cub-hunting. There was a large breakfast provided for the sportsmen, and after waiting and rerefreshing for a short time, I started to draw in the Tanrallt Coverts (nearest to 'Castle Hill'). Found a brace of foxes, an old fox and a cub, but unfortunately the cub was headed back into covert, and the pack broke away with the old fox, which they ran at a tremendous pace down wind and to ground in a drain; but 'Villain' and old 'Lavish' soon got in at him, and hustled him out. The pack was soon laid on again, and streamed away at an awful pace close to his brush, through the Oak Covert, down the road at Abermade, and took him along the road nearly to Abertholwyn Village. Then he turned to the left; crossed the young larch dingle, and over the lawns in front of 'Abertholwyn House,' across the Llanrystyd Road, and up the hill for the sea rocks, which he ran along for half a mile, till he gained the dangerous place at Tanybwllch, where we stopped the hounds, or they would all have broke their necks. So I made Lewis, the Whipper-in, keep the hounds with him, while I and Vaughan Davies took the terriers, taking the precaution to have a rope to them. We tried to find the fox in the rocks, but failed to do so, though we saw his tracks where he had gone down. There were some earths close by, but in too dangerous a place to get at, so we were obliged to leave him. The terriers did not seem to like the rocks at all, and I can well imagine their fright, for it is an awful place, only to look down, much less to go into, even with a rope round you. Many a fox, and many a poor hound, has lost his life in the same place. So, finding we could do nothing with him, we

returned to the hounds, and I got my orders from Col. Pryse to go back to Abermade, to try and find the cub we left there in the morning. First, we had some lunch at Abermade, which was a grand spread, and there were luckily several to sit down to eat it. Then I started to draw the Tanrallt Coverts again in hopes of finding the cub, but there was no such luck for us. I drew every covert in the place and vicinity till half-past three, but all were blank. So I gave it up and returned to kennels after having about the best and fastest 40 minutes I ever saw or rode to in that country, and we certainly would have killed him had it not been for those cursed sea rocks.

"On foot that day were Mrs. Holford, who in the days when she was Miss Pryse, was not to be beaten over the Welsh hills and fences; she rode like a good 'un, and was fond of it, and everything connected with hounds and hunting. I had Lewis and Llewelyn as whippers-in, and Colonel Pryse was out and enjoyed the run immensely, though he was on foot part of the time. The grey mare got the better of me in the morning. It was raining, and the stupid fools of grooms put soft soap on the reins, so that I couldn't hold her in the least, as she pulled very hard and reins kept slipping through my fingers. It was impossible for me in this predicament to attend to hounds, so the Colonel got off and gave me his horse, and took my grey mare, which he led till he got on the road, when he mounted her and rode to meet us at Tanybwllch. It was a beastly day and rained incessantly, but the scent was uncommonly good and the hounds worked well and strong.

Captain Apperley's diaries are very interesting and show, I think, when one compares them with the days I had myself in Brecon sixty years later, that hunting in Wales has not changed very much in the last century, with those packs which hunt the wilder portions of the country and are composed of hounds of the old Welsh type. From the accounts which I have given it can be seen that, in wild



SIR EDWARD CURRI, M.P., WITH "THE WHITE PACK"

countries, a low-scenting hound, with a maximum of tongue, is essential; for there are many days when it would be impossible for a Huntsman—either mounted or on foot—to give them any help. The day which I had with the Brecon was in a country which the Master described as a “good riding country”—to me, it seemed very rough and, in places, unrideable—but when I looked at the steep, rugged, Welsh mountains, looming up not so very far away and was told that hounds were often hunted there, I could understand why this was so.

I believe that Sir Edward Curre of Itton Court, Chepstow, was the first man to realise that, for the more rideable parts of the country, hounds possessing more drive would show better sport and, since his country was of that sort, he set to work to breed such a pack for himself. I had the honour of knowing Sir Edward very well, and we spent many a long evening together talking over the intricacies of hound breeding. He told me that he had taken over a pack of hounds of the old sort from the country—real, old-fashioned Welsh “woollies”—with shaggy coats and deep voices. “I wanted a hound,” he said, “that had drive and voice and speed. I wanted them all of a type, without the woolly coat—which, to me, was unsightly—and I wanted them *white*, so that I could see them in the distance; for, even in my country, hounds often ran in places where a horse could not follow, and it would have been difficult to see the darker-coloured ones. But I did not want to lose the independence and nose of the ‘hound of the country.’ I hunted with various packs of long-established Welsh Hounds—packs that were not in the Foxhound Kennel Stud Book, whose Masters had often kept their own records and who had bred always to the best working strains, and by using those stallions which possessed the most drive and speed, and crossing the produce with Stud Book Hounds which possessed low-scenting qualities and had plenty of tongue—and, whenever possible, the light colour which I

wanted to get, I gradually acquired a type of my own: a type which, as you can see, reproduces itself generation after generation."

Among the packs from which Sir Edward Curre secured some of the best strains was the Glôg—a very old-established Welsh pack, owned and hunted by a much respected Welsh squire—Mr. Thomas Williams of "The Glôg," near Pontypridd. This pack, also known as the Llanwonno Hounds, are described by Mr. Price as a very excellent pack, mostly rough-coated lemon and white hounds, with plenty of dash and music. Like many other neighbouring packs, they hunted fox, hare, and otter, in the country round Pontypridd and Llanwonno—a mountainous district, with deep woodlands and rough valleys, intersected by turbulent rivers. Mr. Williams, the Master, hunted until he had attained a great old age. He was no fine-weather sportsman, but loved to be away with his horn and hounds at the peep o' day, to find the drag of his fox with the dawn, and hunt it to the death through many a long hard run in that wild country.

There were many instances when the old Squire found a fox in the Taff Valley, ran him over the border, and killed in the adjoining county of Monmouthshire. One such instance occurred when hounds ran and killed their fox hard by "Ruperra Castle," the seat of that ardent and esteemed sportsman, Colonel Fred Morgan, who, happening to be at home, was startled by, first the cry and then the view, of hounds running for blood. He was speedily out on his horse, together with his daughter, and they both managed to cut in with the pack in time to see them kill their fox, and heartily congratulate and welcome the Master on their advent at his door after such a remarkable run. Miss Williams, the Master's only daughter, was well up with the pack throughout the run and was up at the death.

Sir Edward told me that the Squire of Glôg was a very great sportsman and that when he was buried, in May of

1889, the entire countryside was at the funeral. The best account of a really wonderful run which took place with this pack about the middle of the Nineteenth Century, appeared in *The Cardiff and Merthyr Guardian*, January, 1858, which reads:—

“It is an old adage that the fox kills his prey far from his home. There must have been something very tempting in the geese and fowls of Llanwonno otherwise Mister Reynard would not have gone so near the residence of such formidable, and as it proved in the present case, fatal enemies as the Glôg Hounds. On Tuesday week this celebrated pack had one of their best runs. His trail was found on Blaenllechau Farm, and followed without a check to Tarran y Bwllfa, near Aberdare, where he was unearthed, and the View Holloa given in excellent style. He then skirted the hill, past Mr. Crawshay’s tower, above the Craig-y-Llyn, crossed the Voel Penderyn, and was finally run into and killed near Craig-y-Nos, in Ystradgynlais. This run, from point to point, cannot be less than from 20 to 25 miles, over a country which would frighten a Meltonian to look at, and the severity of the pace was such that only three gentlemen followed the hounds to the death. It may be remarked, as showing the staunchness of the pack, that, in going through Ystradfellte, they followed the scent through a rabbit warren of some miles in extent, with hundreds of rabbits under their noses, and yet they did not check for a single minute. Near the spot where he was killed there is a tavern, where Mr. Howel Gwyn was holding his rent audit, and that gentleman, having heard of the zeal and enthusiasm of the sportsmen, most kindly gave them a dinner, and a good feed for the hounds. This famous run has set the old Squire of The Glôg in ecstasies. Long may he live to know that his hounds have killed more of the poultry fanciers!”

Small wonder that the Squire of Itton went to the Glôg for some of their best blood, and that because of his un-

precedented breeding policy, the name of the Glôg Nimrod, and others of his kennel-mates appear in the pedigree books of many of the fashionable packs of England and America to-day: for the fame of Sir Edward Curre's White Pack has spread to the Western Hemisphere, as well as across the Border to England.

Captain Apperley, in speaking of Welsh Hounds, remarks that they are fiercer and more obstinate than English Hounds; more difficult to break; bent on having their own way; and *will* kill something; ferocity and obstinacy being outstanding characteristics. Bad-tempered hounds, he goes on to say, were often the best in their work, but very difficult to manage in kennels, and even sometimes in the field. Contrary to the general belief, there are several packs of Welsh Foxhounds still in existence, and it is only a few years ago that I attended the Welsh Hound Show, which was held in conjunction with the Cardiff Agricultural Show. I was staying with Sir Edward Curre, the President of the Welsh Hound Association, and among the other guests at Itton Court were Sir Robert Green Price, a member of the Executive Committee, and Major M. E. Barclay, M.F.H. of the Puckeridge.

At dinner that night little was talked of except hunting, and the merits of every sort of hound—including the American—were discussed at length. One might almost have said that the Hound Show began on the afternoon we arrived at Itton Court, for we all went down to the kennels within fifteen minutes of our arrival and spent a couple of hours looking over the hounds in kennel there, including many which were to be shown on the following day. It was interesting to me to see Sir Edward's Young Entry, which I had had the pleasure of seeing at his Puppy Show, and of noticing the way the 1929 Entry fitted in with the older hounds. The pack as a whole seemed to me even more "sorty" and level than when I had seen them last, and Major Barclay, who told me that he had not seen them for

sixteen years, was much impressed with their quality, as were all of us.

Thursday, the morning of the Show, was a beautiful, clear, bright day, as perfect a day as one could have wished for, and the country looked lovely as we motored through it on our way to Cardiff, some thirty miles to the south, through Sir Edward's own country, then the Llangibby which lies beyond it, and finally through Lord Tredegar's, and so over the river and into Cardiff, which was in holiday attire for the Show, to which a never-ending stream of people was flocking. The Show grounds lie just beyond the town, not far from the racecourse, and the Hound Show proper was in a small enclosure of its own at the far end.

The judging was scheduled to begin at ten o'clock, and as we came up, the Huntsmen were gathering near the Ring, with their hounds for the early classes, their scarlet coats making splashes of colour among the more sober dress of the onlookers. Inside the tent where the judging was to take place all was ready, and, just as we entered, people began to take their seats at the ringside and the Judges came into the Ring. There were fourteen packs represented—the Brecon, the Bwllfa, the Carmarthenshire, Sir Edward Curre's, Mr. David Davies's, the Irvon and Towry, the Llangibby, the North Cornwall, the Pantysgallog, the Pentyrch, the Penylan, the Teme Valley, Lord Tredegar's, and the South and West Wilts—odd names, some of them, and absolutely unpronounceable to anyone but a Welshman. Most of the hounds were shown by their Huntsmen, turned out in scarlet, but there were some exceptions—the Bwllfa Hunt servants, for example, being in green, and the Pentyrch men in dark brown. The Penylan Hounds were shown by two young ladies, who were both smartly turned out in brown breeches and scarlet coats and seemed very much at home, while some few entries came into the Ring in charge of men in rat-catcher attire.

The first class of the Show was for the best couple of

unentered Welsh Doghounds, and here the first prize was won by the Llangibby with a smart couple of youngsters called Farmer and Farrier, by Sir Edward Curre's Falstaff '23, out of their own Plaintiff '26. Knowing nothing whatsoever of the qualities to be desired in a Welsh Hound, I was somewhat at sea as to what to look for, and not a little surprised to find the couple which seemed the best—to my untrained eye—was the one selected by the Judges for first place. These two hounds were beautifully matched, with heavy, rough coats, lemon and white in colour, with excellent legs and good feet, straight enough even for me, well-ribbed-up, and possessing plenty of quality withal—far more, in fact, than I had expected to see. They looked workmen all over, and I was much struck, not only with them, but also with the second and third couples, shown by the Pantysgallog and the Pentyrch.

Interesting as this class was to me, I got an even better idea of the accepted type of Welsh Hound in the one which followed; and since it was for Entered Doghounds, one saw the fully-matured animal, and an even greater variety of them. Sir Edward Curre told me that the improvement in conformation had been marked during the last few years, and Welsh Masters were taking greater interest in breeding hounds which conformed to an accepted standard, as well as for working qualities. The class for Entered Doghounds was a large one, and at the end, the competition narrowed down to a duel between a couple from Mr. David Davies's pack and two, sturdy, workmanlike hounds from the Pantysgallog. The Judges could not make up their minds to which to give the First Prize ribbon, and Sir Edward was called into the Ring to settle the question. After looking them over with the greatest care, he cast his vote in favour of the first-named couple, explaining to me afterwards that they seemed to him a bit better matched and possessed a little more quality, without lacking anything in substance. The classes for bitches were also well filled, the

awards being about evenly divided between hounds coming from the two above-mentioned packs.

To me the class for the Challenge Cup, offered by W. H. P. Rees, Esq., Master of the Pantysgallog, furnished the most interesting competition of the day, the winner being practically the acknowledged Champion Welsh Hound of the Show. It was won by a beautiful home-bred dog from the Pantysgallog—Roman '28—a hound with as much quality and size and substance as one often sees in the straight English Stud Book hound. Standing on the very best of legs and feet, with great depth, which gave him plenty of heart and lung room, this was as beautiful and masculine a type of foxhound as any man could wish to see, and the award was a very popular one with the Ringside.

These Welsh Hounds were not rounded, as are many of their English cousins, and they, of course, had quite long, wiry coats—much like a wire-haired fox-terrier, whose coat has been allowed to go unplucked. Most of them were light-coloured, but the Pantysgallog showed many tan hounds, and their Roman was marked very like the most fashionable Belvoir-tan foxhound of pure English blood. Earl Bathurst—at that time Chairman of the Masters of Fox Hounds Association, one of the most orthodox hound-breeders in England, and a stickler for using only the best Stud Book blood—was an interested spectator at the ringside on that day, and he said to me, after the final Welsh classes had been judged: "I like those Welsh Hounds; they're a fine type; and if I lived in this part of the country, I believe I'd have a pack of them." High praise indeed, from a man who had been breeding his hounds for over forty years, and who was Master of one of the best bred and most beautiful packs in England.

My attention to the judging in the Welsh ring was somewhat distracted by the fact that the cross-bred classes were being judged in a neighbouring enclosure; and as most of the hounds which had gone to America at about

that time had been of that type, I was very curious to see the awards. In the opening class—for Unentered Dogs—the Brecon won with a young dog by Tiverton Lictor '23, who goes back to the best of the old Berkeley sort, which were bred in Lord Fitzhardinge's time. In the next class—for Entered Dogs—however, Sir Edward Curre's Bridegroom '27, by Factor '23, out of Bertha '24, won easily, and was afterwards awarded the Challenge Cup, for the best single cross-bred hound of either sex, in the Show.

Now Bridegroom's sire—Sir Edward Curre's Factor '23—was awarded the Champion Cup at the Hound Show in New York, U.S.A., and he did an immense amount of good to those packs in America whose Masters were wise enough to use him. Like most of Sir Edward Curre's hounds, Factor was very light in colour—as near white as made no difference. He was not a rough-coated hound, but took after his paternal parent, Stevenstone Sanfoin '18, than whom no better hound ever hunted a fox.

I know from personal experience that hounds which brought a strain of the old Welsh blood to those packs which—both in England and America—hunt a country of similar conformation to that which exists in the rougher parts of Wales, have invariably been successful in producing progeny which improved the working qualities of the pack to which they belonged. It is for this reason that I have tried to give a picture of the conditions under which these hounds have hunted in various parts of their native land and also something of the happenings which had culminated in the production of a cross-bred hound—for that is what packs like Lady Curre's, the Brecon, and one or two others really are. I am fully aware that there are many Masters in both England and America to-day who resent the introduction of Welsh blood into their pedigree books; but I am perfectly satisfied that the part which has been played by Welsh Masters who have fostered these same hounds has been a very important one.

Mr. Isaac Bell, one-time Master of the South and West Wilts, was among the first to appreciate the good qualities of hounds from over the border; though Mr. Charles McNeill was, I think, the first Master of a "fashionable" country to use the Welsh outcross at the time that he was Master at the Grafton. Such a procedure savoured of rank heresy in those days (1907) when he bred Mr. Curre's Globule '03 to the Grafton Bashful '06, a mating which produced Grafton Globule '08, one of the best foxhounds in his work in that well-known pack. I first saw Globule in the field in 1912—saw him make a hit which I shall never forget; and it was Mr. McNeill who, a few years later, secured the first large importation of Curre hounds for America. They were so successful in the Western Hemisphere that others followed, and to-day there is hardly a pack of hounds of the English type which have not a very strong infusion of the blood in the veins.

CHAPTER SIX

ORGANISED FOX-HUNTING IN THE BRITISH MANNER IS FIRMLY ESTABLISHED ON THE AMERICAN CONTINENT

THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR—sometimes known as the War between the States—put an end to all organised fox-hunting in the South during its duration and for several years after its close. The big landowners were badly hit financially; some of them ruined; all of them impoverished; and the maintenance of the sort of establishment which many of them had kept up for hunting the country was a thing of the past. But, as we know from recent experience, it takes much more than a war and hard times to stop fox-hunting; and though many packs were given up and all of them drastically cut down, a few of the best old hounds were kept by many breeders—enough, at any rate, to build up new packs along the old blood-lines.

Of course, this was not true of the Northern States, which had not suffered from the desolation which follows an invading army; but the sport of fox-hunting—if by fox-hunting we mean riding to hounds after the manner of our British cousins—had not been firmly established, except in Pennsylvania and Maryland, which were, after all, partly Confederate in their sympathies. To be sure, there were the fox-hunters of New England, who enjoyed their sport in a totally different way—with a couple of slow, cold-scenting hounds, and a gun—but there was little or no hunting north of Pennsylvania until 1874, when Colonel Frederick S. Skinner and Mr. Joseph Donohue maintained a pack of hounds on the edge of the New Jersey meadows at Hackensack. Messrs. Skinner and Donohue were in the habit of drawing their coverts on foot, and, when hounds

found, of retreating to a horse and buggy which stood in the fields near by, and following as best they could, along the roads. When hounds killed, they were generally there, or thereabouts, and although their methods could hardly be endorsed by any previous custom of the hunting field, they were hard to beat at their game.

Eventually, the goings-on at Hackensack came to the ears of half a dozen young men in New York City, one or two of whom had hunted in England, and all of whom were keen for sport of any kind. One by one they stole across the Hudson to Hackensack until the New Jersey pack began to have a following of straight riders. The Joint Masters—Messrs. Skinner and Donohue—still kept to their faithful buggy, but welcomed the riders who flew timber and stone walls and went out of their way to get jumping. But the enclosures were small, the pace was slow, and although a large Field came from New York on Thanksgiving Day of 1876 to join in the fun, they soon found that both hounds and country were really unsuitable to attain good results, and it was decided to make a move. Early in 1877, four gentlemen—Messrs. A. Belmont Purdy, William E. Peet, F. Gray Griswold, and Robert Centre—met at the latter's rooms in New York and subscribed 250 dollars (£50) each, to go towards the purchasing of a pack. Mr. Griswold, who was going abroad, was entrusted with their purchase and selection, and on his arrival in Ireland he obtained, through Mr. Thomas Turbitt, of Scribblestown, a pack of harriers.

During Mr. Griswold's absence, the other three members of this self-appointed committee cast about for a suitable country, and eventually selected that now hunted over by the Meadow Brook. The lease of a farmhouse situated on the property—which the Meadow Brook Club still occupies—was secured; and here, on October 4th, 1877, was held the first meet of "The Queens County Hounds." A letter setting forth the aims and objects of the Hunt had been sent out;

the subscriptions which came in, in response to this, were very gratifying; and when Mr. Griswold—who had been elected Master—turned up at the meet with a useful-looking pack of about seventeen couple, he was greeted by a large Field—for those days—of about 40 or 50 riders, mounted on every imaginable kind of horse, and by spectators in traps of every sort.

Everyone was keen—it was a new game to most of them—and among the names of those who were in the Field that day one could find many familiar ones whose descendants are active in the hunting world of to-day. It is almost twenty years since I sat beside Mr. Griswold one day at The Brook Club in New York, where we were both lunching. He knew that I was keenly interested in the history of hunting on Long Island—and elsewhere; and he was kind enough to tell me much about the sport in his younger days.

“I don’t suppose,” he said, in speaking of that first meet of the Queens County Hounds, “that there were half a dozen ‘qualified hunters’ in the entire Field; but the fox that we found took an easy line, and, though there were a few falls, no one was hurt and a great number of them were up when I killed my fox. The farmers—one or two of them mounted—seemed to enjoy it; it was a novelty to them and they even replaced their broken rails without grumbling. Still—there was some opposition, and oddly enough, it came—not from the agriculturalists, but from the Quakers of the neighbourhood, who denounced it as a ‘Godless employment.’ The Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, whose President was Mr. Henry Bergh, added their protest; declaring it to be an evil sport and unnaturally cruel. Of course, at the present time, it seems to us that the criticisms which we upholders of fox-hunting at that time had to meet, were absurd and merely expressions of prejudice; but you must remember that many prejudices have died in the last fifty years, and that opinions which once existed among the Quakers of Long Island have long since

ceased. In fact, I don't think there are many Quakers left on Long Island nowadays. There was a chap named Hicks, too—'Stiff-necked Ben Hicks' we used to call him—who was a very large landowner in the heart of the Meadow Brook Country—his descendants live there still. He was the Vice-President of Mr. Bergh's Society, and it took a long time to talk him over; and, as is often the case in a country where hunting has just been established, the farmers and landowners soon found that the new residents which hunting brought into the country, brought prosperity with them. Hay and straw and oats found a ready market with the hunting men, who rented houses and stables which had long lain idle, and, at the end of the season, we gave a big Hunt Ball for the farmers and their families. Hunting seemed to have acquired a permanent footing on Long Island.

"The second season brought a reaction from the energy and enthusiasm of the preceding year. That's often the case, I think. Our Fields fell off; the amity of the farmers was not so pronounced; and, if it had not been that a few of us were determined that hunting should survive, the whole thing might have gone up in smoke. But it didn't! We moved our hounds to Central Morrisania, in Westchester County, New York—it's a suburb of the City to-day—and I agreed to act as Master there for the next two years. Our attempt to establish the Hunt there resulted in failure. The going was bad; the fences unrideable; the enclosures too small; and the ground very soft and swampy in many places. New Rochelle was no better, and, in 1881, I took the hounds, which had now become my property, back to Long Island.

"Tom Hitchcock came into the picture about this time;—he had been educated at Oxford you know—and had done a bit of hunting there—and in Ireland. He and Burke Roche bought some hounds in Ireland and sent them over to Belmont Purdy, who hunted them in part of the Meadow

Brook Country, turning the rest of it over to me. Purdy didn't keep the Mastership long; Frank Appleton came after him; and 'Altie' Morgan, and finally, Tommy Hitchcock—I think he had them in '91 or '92. He didn't keep them long; for, in 1893, I was elected and remained Master until I resigned in '95, and put my horn back into its case for the last time."

"What about your hounds during those years in which you weren't Master of the Meadow Brook?" I asked.

"Well," he answered, "we moved all over the Island—I suppose you might call it a sort of 'roving commission'—until I returned to the Meadow Brook Country again, in '93, when I amalgamated my hounds with the existing Meadow Brook pack. It was during those last years at Meadow Brook that Pennell-Elmhirst, who wrote under the name of 'Brooksby,' hunted with us. We gave him a couple of good days which he wrote about in that book of his, *The Best of the Fun*.

"I resigned soon after that and Ralph Ellis took 'em on. He was a great believer in American Hounds and thought that they would show far better sport, under Long Island conditions. I didn't agree with him—of course, I think as you do—and I was very glad when 'Foxy' Keene bought the Salkeld pack in England and brought them over to America, in 1902. But you know all about that, don't you? In fact, I think that was about the time that you and I first met."

"Were the fences just as big in those days as they are now?" I asked.

"Yes," he said, "they were. It was as stiff a country as I've ever ridden over. It would make the veriest 'thruster' from the Shires sit up; but there were no tarmac roads then and the take-offs and landings were sound. Pennell-Elmhirst and that gallant little man, Bob Cotesworth, who came to the Meadow Brook as Huntsman for 'Foxy' Keene, in 1902, crossed it with the best of 'em. Cotesworth came to

you afterwards, didn't he, when Keene gave up the Meadow Brook and Pat Collier took them over? Did you ever see anything stop him?"

"No," I answered, "nor did anyone else. You know, he went from me to the Eleventh Cavalry Hunt at Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia. He *made* that pack, and I think he did more to establish hunting in the United States Army than almost anyone; and then he went to Plunket Stewart, when he first established his hounds, the Cheshire, in Chester County, Pennsylvania. You ought to go down there some day and see them."

Speaking of the Meadow Brook, after Mr. Griswold's resignation, it seems to me that a few words about the hunting, between 1902 and the outbreak of the first World War, would not come amiss; for, in many ways, the history of the Meadow Brook pack is typical of fox-hunting as it was carried on in the Northern States during that period. Foxhall Keene was almost as well known in Leicestershire as he was in America. He hunted in the Midlands, with all the best packs, and even represented one of them in a "Team Race" which was run "over a country." With his coming as M.F.H. at Meadow Brook a new system began. He had purchased from Mr. Salkeld a pack of foxhounds with which the latter had hunted a rough, hilly country in Cumberland, where coverts were large and scenting conditions poor. It was the first pack of hounds that had been purchased *in its entirety* for exportation to America; but Mr. Keene thought that hounds which had been hunted *together* in a poor scenting country would be well suited to conditions on Long Island; and in order that no stone should be left unturned, he engaged a first-class English Huntsman, Robert Cotesworth, to come with them to the Meadow Brook. Cotesworth had a long experience with the best packs in England. He had served as First Whipper-in at the Atherstone, Brocklesby, and Belvoir, and as Huntsman to Earl Bathurst's Vale of White Horse at Cirencester. With

Cotesworth came his son, Tom, who acted in the capacity of First Whipper-in, while Hannon, who had been a long time with the Meadow Brook, served as Second. There were 32 couple in the Salkeld pack and, with these, Mr. Keene hunted foxes three days a week, for two seasons. But scenting conditions on the sandy Long Island soil were even worse than he had realised, and Keene, becoming discouraged, gave up the Mastership at the end of 1904, and sold his entire hunting establishment at auction. The hounds were bought in by the Club, and the Mastership passed to Mr. P. F. Collier, who had, for a long time, maintained a pack of his own in Monmouth County, New Jersey.

Mr. Collier made arrangements with an amateur, Mr. John Foster, to hunt the English Hounds for him, three days a week; and also arranged with Mr. H. I. Varner, of Arkansas, to bring his pack of American Hounds to the Meadow Brook country and hunt them, on alternate days. The experiment did not succeed—Mr. Foster failing to show good sport with the Salkeld pack, and Mr. Varner doing little better with his American Hounds. The following season was rather more successful; but Mr. Collier found that he could not spare the time to continue his Mastership, and, at the end of the season, he resigned.

For the next three years hunting at Meadow Brook was in a somewhat chaotic state. The younger, hard-riding, element in the Club clamoured for the resumption of the drag pack which had been kept in the old days—they wanted galloping, they said, and jumping, and they didn't care a damn for "fuddling round" the scrub oak coverts after a pack of hounds that never gave them a gallop. To cater to the demands of these men, the Committee requested Mr. Malcolm Stevenson to take charge of the drag pack; and for a year the gallant thrusters of the Meadow Brook Field followed a few hounds across as wicked a country as ever was ridden over. At the end of that time Mr. Paul Rainey brought his private pack of American Hounds to Meadow

Brook for a few weeks; but when that proved a failure, Mr. Rainey took his hounds to Africa—to hunt *lions* (!), and it was not until 1910, when Mr. J. E. Davis took over the Mastership, that things began to look up again.

Mr. Davis was not a houndman himself, but he spared neither time nor trouble to provide a class of sport that would be satisfactory to everyone. His first move was to buy a small pack of American Hounds in Virginia, his next to engage an American—Thomas Allison—to hunt them, and his third to see to it that rides were cut in the coverts, so that not only the Huntsman but the Field could get away with the pack, once a fox was found. Allison's experience of hunting in the orthodox manner was small, but he was a keen sportsman, the stiff Meadow Brook fences did not stop him, and before two seasons were over he was showing better sport than the country had seen for many a year. In 1913 Mr. Davis resigned in favour of Mr. H. I. Nicholas, who held the Mastership from 1913 to 1925. The new Master was a real student of hound-breeding, and the value of the work which he did, in building up the Meadow Brook country and in breeding a pack of cross-bred hounds which was second to none in America, stands out—a milestone in the history of fox-hunting in the Western Hemisphere—not dissimilar in many respects to the blending of Welsh blood with that of many of the foremost packs registered in the Foxhound Kennel Stud Book of England.

During the latter years of Mr. Nicholas's Mastership—long before the outbreak of the second World War—I had a long conversation with him concerning the happenings during those years in which he transformed the Meadow Brook hounds from an aggregation of dogs into one of the best packs in the land. I remember that conversation well—it was one evening after an excellent day's sport in the field.

"When I assumed the Mastership of the Meadow Brook in 1913," he said, "I took over about twelve couple of

American hounds which had been obtained from various sources in Virginia, but, as they had been selected for hunting qualities only, they bore little resemblance to each other as regards type, nor had they been properly broken. They could scarcely be called anything but a 'scratch pack.' You remember them—they were what was left of the pack which Joe Davis had, when you brought the Middlesex to Long Island, in 1912. It was necessary to bring them to the meets *coupled*, and when they were uncoupled at the covert-side, they promptly dashed off, throwing their tongues in the unrestrained manner which brought so much discredit to American Hounds.

"Allison's hunting experience, before he came to Meadow Brook, had consisted of hunting the 'trencher-fed' packs of various farmers in Virginia, near where he lived. He had absolutely no experience of hunting a pack of hounds in the accepted method of organised fox-hunting; but he had seen the Middlesex when you brought them here, and when I expressed my desire to have my hounds properly-mannered, he went to work, and, by the time cub-hunting began, no one could have found fault with their manners—on the road or at a meet. It all goes to prove that American Hounds *can* be properly-mannered with a little pains and patience on the part of the Huntsman.

"Considering the bad scenting conditions which usually obtain in these parts, my American 'scratch pack'—augmented with the purchase of a few more couples from Virginia—did very well; the sport continued to improve, and even the scoffers, who had refused to believe that first-class fox-hunting could be enjoyed on Long Island, had to admit that our sport compared well with that shown by the crack packs of Pennsylvania and Maryland and Virginia, where many of my neighbours had been in the habit of migrating during the hunting season.

"With the ever-increasing interest in hunting at Meadow Brook—the Fields had increased to such an extent that, on

Saturdays, we often had as many as two hundred people out—I became more and more ambitious to improve the pack; for, although I had some very good working hounds, they were still an aggregation of individuals—not a ‘pack of hounds.’ What I wanted was a pack that could not only hunt a fox well—a pack that ran together and relied on each other in chase—but I wanted it level in type and pace; and, what was most important of all, I wanted to be reasonably sure that they would reproduce their like when I bred them.

“As you know, when England entered the War, a number of hounds were sent to America—many of them far better than the average drafts which one can usually buy. I obtained eleven couple of bitches from the Warwickshire, the North Warwickshire, and the Flint & Denbigh. Many of them were unsatisfactory in their work; but a few—the Flint & Denbigh lot particularly—were top-hole. The longer a hunt lasted, the farther up these bitches would be running, which convinced me that, though English Hounds may not have as good noses, they certainly have more stamina than American Hounds; due, I think, to years of careful breeding, with stoutness always in view.

“I had talked at considerable length with John Valentine and Redmond Stewart; for I knew that they had experimented with cross-breeding at Radnor and at Green Spring Valley respectively. They both told me that they had found that the American ‘top-cross’—that is to say, the use of an American stallion hound on English bitches—had been the most successful, and I accordingly used stallion hounds of the best Virginia and Walker blood—one of them had been third in the Foxhound Trials in Kentucky. The English dams proved to be fine brood bitches, and the puppies being fairly level as to size and conformation, I had an excellent Young Entry of some 20 couple of Cross-breds when I began cub-hunting the following season. A fair number of these showed up well in the field, and Allison and I felt that, at

last, we were working along the right lines to produce the type of hound we wanted. In 1918, I was lucky enough to get two bitches from the York & Ainsty, which were excellent in their work; and it was from these two—‘Sunshine’ 15 and ‘Rhoda’ 15, put to an American stallion hound, that I got my best results. I put on 5 couple of puppies out of these two bitches—3½ couple, all out of ‘Rhoda,’ which were the most consistent in their work of any that I have ever bred. Perhaps you remember that Meadow Brook swept the boards in the Cross-bred classes at the Bryn Mawr Hound Show two years ago, winning the Masters of Fox Hounds Plate, for the best five couple of hounds. Well—I won that Plate with the hounds I have just told you about. One of the doghounds in that lot I am using to-day, and he is the sire of many of the best of the younger hounds in my kennels.”

“Harry, why do you prefer half-bred hounds?” I asked. “Why not use either straight-bred English or straight-bred American?”

“Well,” he answered, “for the Long Island country, under very poor scenting conditions, with large and impenetrable coverts, I find that the half-breds show the best sport. This I attribute to the fact that the cross which I have described above produces nose, voice, drive, fox-sense, and stamina, to an amazing degree; together with levelness as regards conformation, and hunting together as a pack. The stoutness of the English blood, intensified by generations of careful breeding, is bound to be present; and the desirable qualities of the American Hound—so necessary for hunting under American conditions—make, I think, a very valuable combination. There are many men, I know, who will claim that they have all these qualities in either their English or American packs; if they have, they are most fortunate and I envy them; for it must mean that it is unnecessary to cross-breed in order to attain the desired result. I am only expressing my own opinion, but were I

to start in to breed another pack of hounds, I should certainly go about it in the same way.

"Last year, I got some good hounds from the Monmouthshire, on the Welsh border, and though I have not had time to see the results of breeding them, I must say that they worked brilliantly for me in the field. During the last two seasons I frequently had Fields of 200 people out, and I doubt if any Master has ever received more loyal support, nor do I believe there are a keener lot of people, who mean going—in any country—than those who hunt with the Meadow Brook. It is indeed a treat to see the way they ride straight over a stiff line of fences when hounds really settle down to run. They deserve a better country; but though it has many disadvantages, they get a lot of pleasure out of it and do all they can to help the sport, and sometimes they get a run that makes all the trouble seem worthwhile. We had one in January of last year which is, I think, worth relating to you.

"I remember we found our fox on Sir Ashley Spark's place, near Syosset; and hounds, getting well away with him, ran, at a tremendous pace, through Woodbury, to a point about a mile short of Huntington, without a check. Turning back here, they ran close by Cold Spring Harbour, and checked in a cabbage-field near a road. Allison held them across the tarmac; picked up the line on the other side; and they ran through a big wood, to another cement road which ran alongside a large pond. Hounds were trying down the edge of the road, when I noticed that an old American Hound had swum out about ten yards into the pond. Suddenly he began to give tongue. Like a flash, the whole pack flung themselves into the water, and giving tongue all the way, swam straight across the pond—about 150 yards. Without hesitation, they picked up the line on the opposite shore and ran straight back, without a check, for two miles; killing their fox in a field on the Sparks estate, quite close to where they had found him. As I figure

the point it was somewhere between five and six miles; the run must have been between eleven and twelve. We had 18½ couple out; every hound swam the pond; and all were in at the death.

"The incident at the pond was a most interesting bit of hound work, as the fox had already crossed when hounds got there. The scent must have either lain on the water or in the air above it; for the hound who picked it up evidently could not own it until he had swum some distance out from the shore. I don't think I shall ever forget the sight of the pack swimming that pond; or the echo of their cry in the wooded hills which surrounded it."

In North-Western New York State, not far from the border of Canada, is the little town of Geneseo, and it was here, in the Genesee Valley, that Major William Austin Wadsworth built his kennels and founded the Genesee Valley Hunt—in 1876. The family came originally from New England, when General James S. Wadsworth moved from Connecticut to Geneseo, at the close of the Revolutionary War, and built the house known as The Homestead, where Major Wadsworth, lived. During the years of his Mastership—from 1876 to 1917—the Hunt was in every sense a private one, for the Master owned the hounds, the kennels, the majority of the coverts; and defrayed all expenses of every kind, never accepting any subscription—except to the "Damage Fund"—during his long tenure of office.

He was a real houndman, a staunch believer in English Stud Book hounds, and spared neither trouble nor expense to get together a pack which not only showed brilliant sport, but held its own on the flags with the best in the land. In 1880, his first hounds came from the Meath, followed, in 1884, by a very good draft from Lord Fitzhardinge's, among which he told me, that Ruler '76, Viscount '81, Frantic, '80, Castor '80, and Vocal '81, were exceptionally useful. In 1887, a draft came from Sir Bache

Cunard's (later Mr. Fernie's), but these the Major found rather light of tongue; and to rectify this defect he bred to stallions secured from Lord Tredegar's and The Duke of Beaufort's—with good results. With all this well-bred material as a basis, Major Wadsworth succeeded in breeding a very good pack; although it suffered badly from rabies in 1902. In 1906, he put on four couple by The Duke of Beaufort's Darter '99, who traces to Belvoir Weathergage, through Mr. Mackenzie's Dexter '97, by Belvoir Dexter '95; and we find, on looking up the Badminton list, that His Grace used this stallion a great deal, putting on eight couple, by him, in 1903, and several in 1904. Five couple were also put on, by the Atherstone-bred stallion, Trampler, 1900, and this same hound was responsible for the entire entry, in 1908 and 1909. At the dispersal sale of the Woodland Pytchley, in June, 1908, Major Wadsworth bought a stallion hound called Hazelwood '07, by Belvoir Warlabby '04; thus getting the fashionable and useful line to Grafton Woodman, 1892, so much sought after by English Masters. It will be seen from the foregoing that the Genesee Valley Hounds were a very well-bred pack, and it is small wonder to me that they showed such brilliant sport, even in a country which, although it contained many acres of grass, was also interspersed with many bad-scenting tracts. At the New York Hound Show of 1915, which was judged by that well-known amateur Huntsman and hound-breeder, Captain C. F. P. McNeill, the Genesee Valley Hounds won a large share of the ribbons, and it must have been a source of great satisfaction to Major Wadsworth to see his home-bred bitch, Plover '13, awarded the Champion Cup of this Show, over some of the best bitches that had recently been imported from England.

It seemed a pity that this pack, which had been in the hands of one man for more than forty years, had to be disbanded; but the Master felt so strongly that the encroachment of wire through the country was bound to put

an end to hunting in the Valley, that, in 1917, he decided to give up hunting, and presented what remained of his pack to the Master of The Middlesex, who at that time was hunting the Millbrook Country. Major Wadsworth's service to the cause of fox-hunting in America is one that cannot be forgotten. When the Masters of Fox Hounds Association of America was founded, in 1907, he was one of the Charter Members and its first President, remaining an active member of the Executive Committee for many years, a link between the old days and the new.

Turning now to Pennsylvania, which might almost be termed the home of organised hunting in the United States, we find that the Rose Tree Fox Hunting Club, whose claim to be the direct descendant of the Gloucester Fox Hunting Club is certainly justified, was organised in 1859, by the election of J. Howard Lewis as President, George E. Darlington as Secretary, and J. Morgan Baker as Treasurer. These gentlemen and a number of their friends all kept hounds, which sometimes hunted together as a "trencher-fed" pack, and were sometimes hunted as separate packs for the amusement of their individual owners and their friends. Every member of the Club was an active and trained fox-hunter, well qualified to hunt hounds by practical experience; and for this reason, no Master of Hounds or Huntsman was appointed; although a coloured Whipper-in—Jim Miller—was employed to bring back stray hounds and to attend to them in kennels.

It was typical American "trencher-fed" hunting; very much the sort of thing that had gone on in Virginia in Washington's time, with hounds that were hardly as good as those used in the South and East later on, and horses which had little thoroughbred blood in their veins. In 1873, the Rose Tree Club was reorganised; and during the next five or six years it increased in membership and the quality of sport shown, as well as in the quality of horses which resulted in the starting of a little Race Meeting on

the old Rose Tree track, which has continued to the present day. With the incorporation of the Club, in 1881, came the acquirement of a Clubhouse; formerly the old Rose Tree Inn; which is still occupied by the Hunt. In 1874, there was a feeling among some of the members of the Club that an infusion of English blood might be an advantage to the pack, which were undisciplined and hard to control. Accordingly, three or four couple of English Hounds were imported; but they—like many other *drafts*—were not found suitable, and were quickly disposed of.

In this connection, I think it should be clearly pointed out that the average American hunting man of that time apparently did not realise that *draft* hounds—which could be bought for a very moderate sum in England and imported to America—were often not fair representatives of the pack from which they came; either in work or conformation. In reading over the journals of the owners of American Hounds—men like Trigg and Birdsong and Maupin—I have realised that these men, when they sold a hound, did so with the intention of parting with something that would bring credit to themselves, as well as to the buyer. A *pack*, to such men as those mentioned above, meant 10 or 12 couple of hounds at the outside; not 30 or 40 couple, as is the case in England. In those days there was no regular yearly draft; and Americans generally were unaware that it was the custom in England to sell only the “chaff” (as it were) which had been separated from the “wheat.” Consequently, it was only by chance, in those early days, that any really good representatives of the English Stud Book Hound crossed the water at all. Even at the Rugby Hound Sales, where small individual lots were offered, this was true—though to a somewhat less extent. The only sure way to acquire really first-class hounds from England was either to attend the *dispersal sale* of one of the well-known packs, where everything was offered to the highest bidder, or to buy privately entire drafts of entered

and unentered hounds, in the hope of getting a few useful workers among the unentered lot, or being able to *breed* some good stock from the old hounds, which, though they had passed their usefulness in the field, were still serviceable in the stud.

The first man to realise this was Charles E. Mather, who, in 1887, had been elected Master of the Radnor Hunt, with kennels at Bryn Mawr, just outside Philadelphia. Mr. Mather hunted the American Hounds which he found there for a time; and though they were of the usual uneven and undisciplined character to be found in the numerous packs in Pennsylvania, they answered their purpose until misfortune in the shape of rabies appeared, and practically the whole pack had to be destroyed. It was in a measure to replace this loss that Mr. Mather bought the Belvoir draft, in the Fall of 1890—young and old—31 couple in all: engaging as Huntsman Frank Gillard, Junior; a son of the noted Belvoir Huntsman of the same name. For a time, English and American Hounds were hunted together, or separately, as it might chance; but, in 1897, the land in the Radnor Country becoming more thickly settled, and the sentiment of the Radnor members being strongly for the American pack, Mr. Mather resigned and transferred his own hounds—the English draft—to Brandywine Meadow Farm, near West Chester, Pennsylvania—which he had purchased some years before.

Mr. Mather had very strong views on the subject of what was and what was not a thoroughbred foxhound; claiming that the definition meant the same thing in England and America: "We come down," he used to say, "to the distinction of hounds of pure blood and hounds that have been crossed with other breeds. My hounds are not *English* Hounds—they are *Chester County* Hounds, all having been bred on my farm for more generations than the average American—they are English by descent only. I feel positively sure that my home-bred hounds are faster and



THE MIDDLESEX FOXHOUNDS IN THE MILLBROOK COUNTRY

From the painting by Frank Foss

have better noses than their imported progenitors. I also think that they have become more self-reliant, because they have always been given a wider range when drawing our large woodlands." Mr. Mather, who died in 1928, had very definite ideas as to how hounds should be handled in the field, and believed in letting them work out the line of their fox alone under all circumstances; and also in allowing them to draw very wide—particularly in open country. It was his wish to produce a pack of hounds capable of sufficient independence of action, to enable them to spread out and find their fox in open country, and at the same time to display a high degree of co-operation in their hunting, and instantly pack together at the first sign of any activity by any hound in the open, or hark to the first authoritative tongue in covert—and he came very near to doing it.

For twenty years he had a very able Lieutenant in Will Thompson, at one time Huntsman to the Berkeley (Lord Fitzhardinge's), who, coming to Mr. Mather as Huntsman in 1905, not only proved himself able to carry out his ideas, but spared neither time nor patience to accomplish that which his Master planned.

The Montreal, of which we have already spoken, the Genesee Valley (Major Wadsworth's), the Brandywine (Mr. Mather's), and The Middlesex, of which I have not yet spoken, were four of the leading packs of foxhounds hunting on the Western side of the Atlantic in the period between the close of the Civil War and the outbreak of the first World War—perhaps not any more important than some of the other establishments, but certainly ranking among the best in the Northern States. Three of these packs were privately owned and maintained by their Masters, who stopped at nothing to produce the best; and all three of these Masters were of the same opinion that, for organised hunting in the orthodox fashion, nothing could beat hounds which traced their ancestry to the Foxhound Kennel Stud Book of England.

There were Masters who differed with them on this point, and that difference of opinion resulted in a match between the English Foxhounds of the Middlesex, and the American Foxhounds of the Grafton (U.S.A.) under the Mastership of the late Harry Worcester Smith. In due course, 18½ couple of the Middlesex Foxhounds, most of them imported from the pack of Mr. C. W. B. Fernie, were shipped to Virginia and kennelled at Middleburg, where the Middlesex contingent had hired stabling, kennels, and a house for their own accommodation. Mr. Smith's "camp" was at the Dulany farm at Upperville, some ten miles down the Valley, and there were gathered the members of the Grafton Hunt. 6½ couple of American Hounds,—the number which the Grafton Master elected to use in the contest,—were kennelled near by.

The match had been given a good deal of publicity in the sporting papers, and hunting people had gathered from far and near to see the fun. Every available accommodation for man or beast in the neighbourhood was occupied, and there were representatives of twenty-six Hunts in the Field, when the Middlesex met at "Welbourne," the historic seat of Colonel Dulany, an ex-Master of the Piedmont Country, on the opening day. The scene resembled an English Boxing Day meet; for there were people out on every type of animal from a Shetland pony to a farm-horse—as well as many foot-followers—when hounds finally moved off to draw.

To give a detailed description of each day's hunting, by the two packs, or of the many incidents which occurred to make that fortnight a memorable one for those who were there, is manifestly impossible. As has been said, the Middlesex contingent occupied an entire house at Middleburg, and if the sleeping quarters and bathing facilities were somewhat crowded, the same could not be said of the Commissary Department; for Mr. Leonard Ahl of Boston, who had been elected "Quartermaster General," had shipped

down several cases of good wine, and Mrs. Brown—who prided herself on her cooking—certainly upheld the reputation of Virginia in the way of fried chicken and Virginia ham. What gay dinner-parties those were—after the day's sport was over!

The inmates of the two "camps" did not see much of each other; for Mr. Smith's action on the opening day, in trying to sell "badges" to those sportsmen and women who had gathered to see the fun, for the benefit of the Piedmont Hunt—of which he had been elected Master—led to bitter feeling with many people, including the native Virginians, who were not accustomed to such proceedings. To the Northerners, however, the Virginians showed the greatest hospitality, and I remember with particular pleasure dining with that gallant old one-armed Confederate veteran who had founded the Piedmont Hunt many years before.

Mr. Allen Potts of Richmond, who had been appointed official "Clerk of the Match," states in his report of the first day's trial, when the Middlesex Hounds were in the field, that "the coverts at Beaver Dam were drawn from 8.00 a.m. till 9.55 a.m., when hounds were ordered home, and during that time, no fox was found." On the following day, the Grafton Hounds, meeting at 6.15 a.m., drew till 11.30, but again the day was blank. The second day, on which the Middlesex hunted, was a bit more encouraging. Hounds found at 9.30 a.m., on Panther Skin Creek, and went away close behind their fox, running for 47 minutes without a check. Unluckily, the fox crossed posted land and the Field had to make a detour before they could nick in again, on a beautiful bit of upland country, which afforded a capital gallop, until their quarry took them across Goose Creek at an unfordable place, and though the pack swam the Creek, the Field were again thrown out.

On November 6th, the Middlesex had its third day, hounds finding a fox at 7.30 a.m. and giving the Field a

capital run of 57 minutes before they marked their quarry to ground at an open earth above Goose Creek. The following day the American pack was out again, and as I remember it, had a good burst of 25 minutes before they lost.

The full story of the match has often been told in the annals of fox-hunting, and it does not seem to me worth while to go into further details here; particularly since the English pack—being almost entirely composed of draft hounds—could hardly be called representative. The contest lasted two weeks, and since neither pack killed, the Judges had an almost impossible task to render a decision which, under the rules of the match, they were forced to do. After much careful deliberation they decided in favour of the American pack, and though both Masters were good sportsmen enough not to discuss the matter, neither of them altered his views as to the respective merits of the two sorts of hounds. The general opinion expressed at the time was that such a match was no test of hunting qualities, and that it only created bad feeling. Personally, looking back over the forty years that have elapsed since those days, I have only happy memories, particularly of the way that three gallant ladies—Mrs. Maddux, Mrs. Pierce, and Mrs. Ladenburg—crossed that country, stopping for nothing, turning aside for nothing, and riding—as one man expressed it—“straight for the sea.”

But though the match proved nothing, it did give a tremendous impetus to fox-hunting all over the United States, and in 1907 a number of representative Masters of Hounds met in New York at the suggestion of Mr. Harry W. Smith and organised the Masters of Foxhounds Association of America, along the lines adopted by the British organisation of a similar sort, which had been founded in 1881, electing Major William Austin Wadsworth, M.F.H., as its first President.

The formation of the Association had many beneficial results, not the least of which was the fact that it drew the

hunting men of the North and South together, as was bound to be the case; since the match was held in the country which had been hunted for more than fifty years by one of the most famous of the Southern Hunts—the Piedmont. I have already spoken of the fact that the War between the States (1861 to 1865) had left many of the great Southern landowners sadly impoverished. The men who had fought in the War—many of them sportsmen—were not embittered. The War was over; the decision had been reached; and they were all ready to strive together again for the building up of a nation united in every way—both for work and for play. Unhappily, this was not true for many years with the younger generation, who, perhaps, felt the pinch more than their fathers. I think that this fact can be realised by those of us who are living to-day, for it is mirrored in the novels of modern times. Be that as it may, I know from experience that the Masters of Fox Hounds in the South—in Virginia and the Carolinas, and even in Maryland—resented the influx of the Northern contingents of fox-hunting men, who came with their packs of hounds and well-turned-out Hunt servants—accoutred with all the panoply of the chase—to hunt the countries which had always been hunted by native packs, mastered by men who belonged to the families of the original settlers of the soil.

The outbreak of the first World War brought many British hunting men—among them several Masters of Hounds—to America, in the service of the British Remount Commission. One of these men, Captain C. F. P. McNeill, judged at the National Hound Show at New York in 1915; and at a dinner which was given to him by the M.F.H. Association of America, he told the members something of the troublous times which threatened the sport of fox-hunting in England. A year later, another ex-Master, Sir Charles Gunning, the head of the British Remount Commission, was the guest of honour at a similar dinner.

At that dinner, nearly one hundred American Masters and ex-Masters of Hounds voted, by acclamation, to offer to care for 150 couple of hounds, for the duration of the War, to be selected by officials of the British M.F.H. Association, and to return them free of all charge to their owners at the end of the War ; so that the irreplaceable blood of the breed should be preserved. The offer was never taken up, for conditions were not as bad in England as had been feared ; and though the reduction of some of the packs was drastic, fox-hunting was not proscribed.

The entry of the United States into the War, rather more than a year later, saw all the members of the M.F.H. Association of America either enlisted or in War work of some sort, and the hunting there, in the South and the North and the East and the West, was carried on, *as it should be in war-time*, by “old men and maidens.”

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE MASTERS OF FOX HOUNDS ASSOCIATION IS FOUNDED. THE CAREERS OF THREE GREAT MASTERS

ALMOST a hundred years ago, in 1856 to be exact, twenty-four members of Boodles Club—all of them Masters of Foxhounds—wrote the following letter to the Managers of the Club:—

“Much inconvenience having long been felt from there not being any tribunal to which both Masters of Foxhounds and Proprietors of Coverts may confidentially refer all matters in dispute connected with Foxhunting, it is proposed to establish a Committee of Boodles Club, to be composed exclusively of such Members thereof as are or have been Masters of Foxhounds, to receive and determine all such references as may be made to them.

“The undersigned therefore request the Managers of the Club to call a General Meeting, to take the sense of the Club on the following Resolutions:—

““That all present Members of the Club who are or have been Masters of Foxhounds, be allowed to form a Committee, to be called the Masters of Foxhounds Committee. Such Committee to have sole power to make Rules for its future constitution and government, and the admission of members to the same. Provided always, that none but the Members of the Club can be Members of the Committee, and that all persons ceasing to be Members of the Club, shall also cease to be Members of the Committee.’”

This communication was duly acted upon at a Special General Meeting called by the Managers of Boodles, and a letter sent out to the Members which read as follows:

"Boodles, 12th July, 1856.

"I am directed to communicate to you the above report of the proceedings of the Club this day and to inform you that a meeting of such members of the Club as are qualified by being or having been Masters of Foxhounds to become members of the Masters of Foxhounds Committee, will be held at the Club on Saturday, the 19th of July, at three o'clock, when the rules for the future constitution and government of the said Committee will be determined on, at which meeting your attendance is earnestly requested."

There were present at that meeting: Lord Redesdale, an ex-Master of the Heythrop from 1842 to 1853 when he resigned owing to the proposed passage of the railway through part of the Heythrop country; Lord Southampton, Master of the Grafton; Sir Bellingham Graham, Bart., well known in the hunting world, ex-Master of half a dozen famous packs, among them the Badsworth, the Atherstone, the Pytchley and the Quorn; Mr. T. C. Garth, at that time starting on his career as Master of his own hounds—a Mastership which lasted for half a century; Mr. St. John, who had only just given up the Mastership of the Garth; and Mr. Thornhill, who had ruled over the Warwickshire from 1833 to 1836. These six gentlemen elected Lord Redesdale chairman of the meeting, at which the following rules for the future constitution and government of the Committee were adopted:—

- "1. Membership, in accordance with the circular issued to the Managers of Boodles Club.
- "2. There shall be five Stewards of the Committee, one of whom shall go out of Office on the 1st of July in each year and shall not be capable of re-election for one year. His Successor shall be appointed by the Stewards.
- "3. The first Stewards shall be The Duke of Beaufort,

Lord Southampton, Lord Redesdale, Sir Bellingham Graham, Bart., and Mr. Greene, each of whom shall retire in the order in which he is named."

The late Major Cecil Pelham, the Honorary Secretary of the Masters of Foxhounds Association, from whose short history of that organisation much of the information regarding its early days is drawn, states in a note regarding the foregoing paragraph: That at that time (1856) the Stewards appear to have been in the same position as the present Committee, and the Committee to the present members of the Association. A list of the various gentlemen who officiated on the Board of Stewards during the next twenty-five years includes the names of many famous Masters of Hounds, among them such well-known men as Lord Forester, Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Mr. Meynell Ingram, Lord Poltimore, Mr. Anstruther Thomson, Lord Middleton, Lord Leconfield, Mr. Henry Chaplin, Mr. Chaworth Musters, the Earl Spencer, the Earl of Lonsdale, the Earl of Zetland, etc., etc.

All seems to have gone smoothly until, in 1881, a circular was issued by the 8th Duke of Beaufort, which, in part, ran as follows:—

"Badminton, May 14th, 1881.

"The Committee of Masters of Foxhounds of 'Boodles Club' having ceased to exist in consequence of the withdrawal from the Club of most of its Members, it is thought desirable that all Masters of Hounds in Great Britain should form an Association, and from their body appoint a Committee to settle any disputes that may arise between Masters or Countries.

"To effect this object you are invited to attend a meeting on Thursday, the 2nd of June at Tattersall's. . . .

"All details as to constitution, number, etc., of the Committee, to be settled at the General Meeting. It is

suggested, subject to the alteration that may then be agreed to, that a Committee of nine would be a workable number. . . .

"It is also suggested that valuable assistance may be derived from ex-Masters of Hounds of long standing being invited to join; and that all those who come under that description, and who belong to the Committee of Boodles, be especially invited to do so. . . .

(Signed) "BEAUFORT."

A meeting of Masters of Hounds convened by the above circular was held at Tattersalls on the 2nd of June, 1881, the Duke of Beaufort presiding. His Grace explained that, as the Boodles Club Committee had come to an end, he thought it very desirable, in case any dispute should arise between Masters of Hounds and their Committees regarding anything relating to boundaries, or—for that matter any other cause—that there should be some sort of tribunal to settle the matter without an appeal to a court of law. The Chairman further stated that he had received answers to the circular letter which he had sent out on the 14th of May, from 105 active Masters and several ex-Masters, all of whom had agreed to join the proposed Association. After due deliberation, the Meeting appointed a Committee of nine, consisting of the five "Stewards" of the Boodles Club Committee, with the addition of four other members: the Earl of Zetland, the Earl of Macclesfield, the Marquis of Waterford, and the Earl of Coventry. Mr. J. Rooke Rawlence consented to act as Honorary Secretary.

The first meeting of the Committee was held on the 20th of June, 1881, and at that meeting Rules for the future constitution of the Association were adopted. It was also decided at this meeting that two members of the Committee should retire annually—an arrangement which was eventually altered, so that, at the present time, three members retire annually and are not eligible for re-election for one

year, the Committee electing its own Chairman annually as from the 1st of July.

It is not my purpose to elaborate on the many useful functions which the M.F.H. Association has fulfilled during its existence. Many disputes which might otherwise have resulted in bitter controversies have been amicably and satisfactorily settled; but perhaps the most important function of all has been the publication of an official Foxhound Kennel Stud Book, which, beginning with the third volume containing a complete list of 53 packs of Foxhounds selected by the Committee of the M.F.H. Association, was edited, at their request, by the Reverend Cecil Legard and published in 1886. In an explanatory note in the front of this publication, the Editor states that "as it is proposed to publish a new Volume of 'The Kennel Stud Book' every few years, Mr. Legard will feel much obliged to Masters of Hounds if they will kindly send him one of their Annual Printed Lists each November."

This procedure was followed for twenty years, and then, at the Annual General Meeting of the Members of the Master of Foxhounds Association, held at Tattersalls on the Monday in the Epsom Race Week, May 28th, 1906, it was decided to republish the first two Volumes of the Foxhound Kennel Stud Book, which had long been out of print, and which were compiled respectively by Mr. Vyner, in 1841, and by Mr. Cornelius Tongue ("Cecil"), in 1866.

The first of these Volumes contained a List of His Majesty's Buckhounds and of forty-six packs of Foxhounds. In it Mr. Vyner stated that "The Stud Book would have been much larger but that some Masters of even the oldest established Packs never publish their Lists; while among the Lists of others so many false pedigrees have been discovered that the compiler has declined inserting them."

Thirty of these Volumes have now been published, and a thirty-first is in course of preparation, although its publication has been delayed owing to the War. Mr. Legard

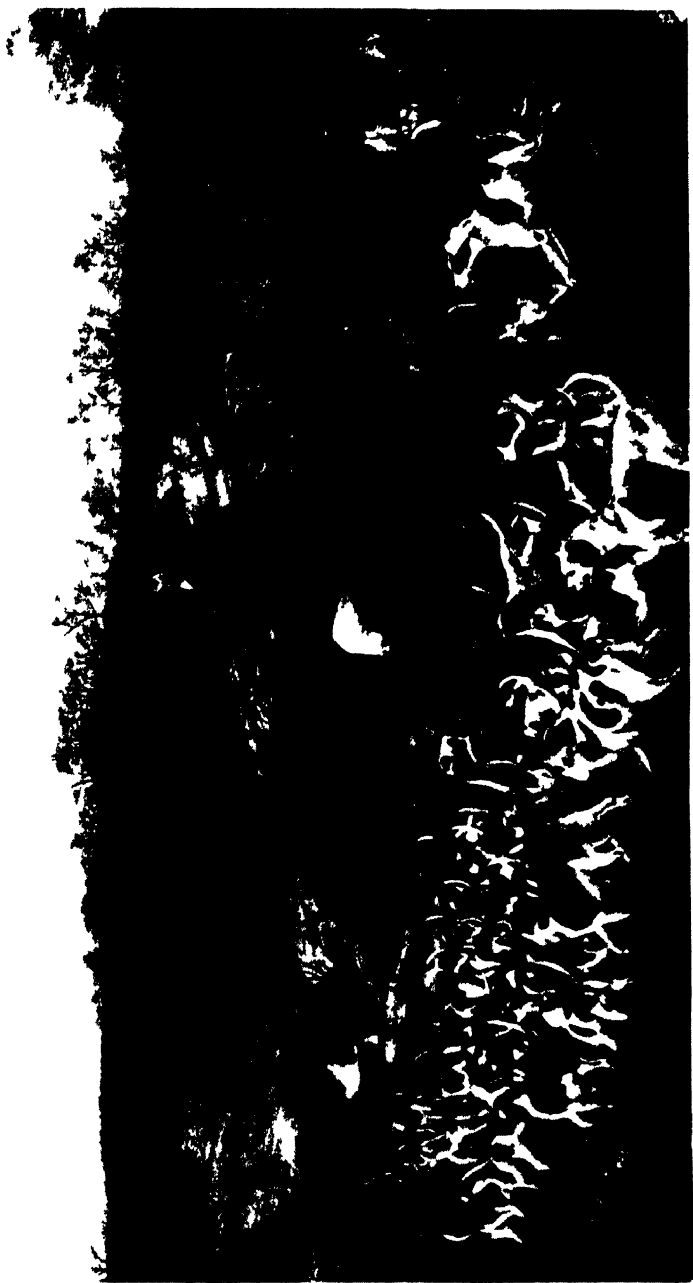
has long since joined that band of fox-hunters who, to quote him, have gone to "that beautiful grass country, where there's always a scent and there's never a blank day," but the Stud Book has been carried on by Messrs. H. E. Preston, the Committee, and recently by Major Cecil A. Pelham, who at present holds the office of Honorary Secretary to the M.F.H. Association.¹ Up to the outbreak of the recent World War over 15,000 entries from more than 200 packs of hounds have been recorded and published, and in addition to these a *Supplement to the Foxhound Kennel Stud Book*, compiled by the late Earl Bathurst, C.M.G., M.F.H., was privately issued by him in 1928, which includes many pedigrees of hounds of earlier date than the Stud Book records.

Rule 28 of the Constitution of the Masters of Foxhounds Association reads that: "To be eligible for entry in the Foxhound Kennel Stud Book, hounds must have been bred, 'entered' and worked in a recognised Foxhound Kennel; beside which, their sires and dams must also have been bred, 'entered' and worked in a recognised Foxhound Kennel, and registered in the Foxhound Kennel Stud Book, or both their grandsires and both their granddams must have been registered in the Foxhound Kennel Stud Book. In every case, all entries must be approved by the Committee of the Association. This rule applied to Volume XVII. and to all subsequent issues of the Stud Book."

The Rule concludes with the definition of a recognised Foxhound Kennel, which is "one consisting of Hounds, kept for hunting the fox only, and entered in, or eligible for, entry in the Foxhound Kennel Stud Book, and approved by the Committee."

It can easily be understood that there must be a governing body to decide the many disputes which inevitably arise between Masters and Countries, and to adjudicate generally on any questions which may crop up concerning the

¹ Major Pelham has died since this was written,



THE MARQUIS OF WORCESTER AFTER THE DUKE OF BEAUFORT

From the painting by Trood now in the possession of his grandson the 10th Duke of Beaufort

management of the sport. If there had always been a body similar to the present M.F.H. Association it would have saved many a bitter controversy in the past.

The names of three great Masters of Hounds come to my mind as having had, perhaps, a greater influence on what might be termed the "Golden Age of Fox-hunting," than any others—Henry Adelbert Wellington FitzRoy Somerset, 9th Duke of Beaufort, Henry Verney, Lord Willoughby de Broke, eighteenth Baron, and Henry Chaplin, Esq.—afterwards Lord Chaplin. Of course, there were many other Masters of Hounds who played a very important part in the history and development of the sport during the period which began in the latter half of the Nineteenth Century and ended with the first World War; but the three men whose names I have mentioned were, all of them, born within a few years of each other, and two of them lived to see the recovery of fox-hunting after the Armistice of 1918. All three might fairly be classed as great hound men; all three hunted their own hounds, and were fully conversant with the intricacies of the art of hunting and the breeding of foxhounds; and one of them, the 9th Duke of Beaufort, was unquestionably the acknowledged authority on fox-hunting of his time.

Badminton and Fox-hunting are synonymous terms, and the Dukes of Beaufort have always been regarded by the public as kings of the fox-hunting world since that day when the 5th Duke turned the family pack of staghounds into foxhounds. The 9th Duke was born in 1849 and died in 1924. He began hunting hounds in 1868, and he was still hunting hounds when I went out with the pack in 1912, though at that time he was a very heavy man. In his book, *Famous Foxhunters*, Lionel Edwards says: "I first saw Badminton shortly before both the Duke and Will Dale, his Huntsman, quitted the saddle for good, and it has

always seemed to me—being more interested, I fear, in horses than in hounds—that the most memorable thing was the Duke's personal horses."

I was more lucky than Mr. Edwards, for His Grace was still hunting the dog pack when I was there in 1912, and at that time he was kind enough to mount me on two of his own horses. I must agree with Mr. Edwards in thinking that they were unique; for we had a very good day, and they carried me brilliantly, in spite of the fact that, as one somewhat malicious lady remarked, the Duke never jumped a fence in those days. I had been aware of this fact and, coming down in the train from London with him on the previous day, I had tactlessly said:—

"They tell me you never jump a fence, sir, and yet you hunt hounds. How on earth do you do it?" His Grace turned to me with a smile and remarked dryly:—

"Young man, if you had been hunting a country for forty-seven years, wouldn't you know where the holes were?" and then he added: "You see, I'm a bit heavy to jump nowadays." He was a very big man, standing 6 feet 4 inches in his stocking feet, and broad and heavy all over: he told me that he rode over twenty stone—and I can well believe it. But in spite of that fact he had such a wonderful knowledge of his country as well as an uncanny gift—almost an intuition of knowing which way his hunted fox had gone—that up to the time he gave up hunting hounds himself no Huntsman was his peer in the Badminton country, and even after that, when he followed hounds in a Ford car, it was said of him that "given a horn and his hounds, he could still catch a fox as well as any Huntsman in England."

As I have said, the 9th Duke (then Lord Worcester) began hunting his father's hounds shortly before he became of age. Tom Clark, the professional who had hunted them for ten years, could no longer ride up to his pack, and the old Duke, who had not failed to note how keenly his son was interested in the work of hounds, felt that he was

competent to carry the horn, although it is doubtful whether father or son realised that they were beginning a period that will ever be memorable in the history of fox-hunting. The success of the move was apparent from the first, and the sport under the new Huntsman improved steadily, although it must be remembered, in justice to the memory of the 8th Duke and Tom Clark, that the par'l. then in the Badminton kennels was a very good one, and the young entry for 1868 among the best that had been on the flags at Badminton for many a long season.

Mr. T. F. Dale in writing of those days says: "The severest critics a huntsman can have are his hounds. They know much about him, and the degree of affection and pleasure they display on seeing him is no bad criterion of his skill in showing sport. Lord Worcester was able to be but little in the kennel—his duties as a subaltern of the Royal Horse Guards could not be neglected—and all the cub-hunting was left to Charles Hamblin, an excellent and faithful servant, and yet no sooner did the tall figure in green plush, so often mounted on the white horse (old 'Beckford') appear at the fixture, than hounds rushed to greet him with every demonstration of delight. There were few huntsmen more careful not to disappoint hounds than Lord Worcester, for it was well known that when they killed a fox they were allowed to break him up while still afire with the enthusiasm of the chase. There was none of that ceremony that newspaper reporters delight to speak of as the 'obsequies' which, picturesque and imposing as they may be, often make hounds careless and indifferent about breaking up their fox at all, and thus defeat the very purpose for which they are blooded.

"Lord Worcester loved the big, sensible doghounds, which often show the best sport in thick woodlands with a first-rate Huntsman, but which invariably require greater patience and tact in handling than is needed with bitches, and it was with them that the young huntsman scored

what was perhaps his greatest achievement in the field—the Greatwood Run—which took place on February 22nd, 1871.

“The fixture was at Swallett’s Gate. The Badminton coach and the hound van were left at Sutton, and hounds and the party from Badminton trotted on from there, among them Lord Worcester, who on that day was mounted on the famous Beckford, a flea-bitten grey, whose skin was afterward on the floor of his bedroom until his death, in 1924. He must have been a horse of great courage and staying power, for on that day he did all the work which a Huntsman’s horse has to do, and only stopped at Kempsford, a few miles before the end. Lord Worcester had 17½ couples of the big dog pack out—in their veins ran the best foxhound blood of the day—all the great hunting strains of Badminton, and Belvoir, of Brocklesby and Fitzwilliam and Blankney—of the great pack that Lord Henry Bentinck had bred so carefully for many years.

“There was a long draw, and it was not until hounds had reached the east end of Greatwood that they found their fox. Comparatively few people heard the whistle (a whistle was always used at Badminton in those days in lieu of a “holloa,” and is still), for the wind had chopped round to the south-west and was blowing fresh, but Lord Worcester and Long and a few others got a good start, and hounds had just settled down to run when the fox was headed near Brinkworth Brook and swung back to the wood again. A bold fox like this one always makes his point if he possibly can, and the pilot entering the wood on the opposite side to that from which he had left it, ran through without stopping. There was a tremendous cry, and those who failed to get away at first were able to get on terms with them again—a blessing in disguise, although they did not realise it at the time.

“This time the fox was fairly away, but the Brinkworth Brook lay before them and took its toll of the field. Some charged it, some refused, and some went in. Lord Worcester

and a few followers saved their horses a little by crossing over the bridge, but few of those who were thrown out at the brook ever saw hounds again that day. Giving hounds time to make their own cast, Lord Worcester watched them closely, and then with a low whistle quietly held them on. Steadily and without any flash they settled to the line again and drove hard for Somerford Common, a famous covert well known to followers of the V.W.H. Hounds never paused or wavered on the Common, for the fox had gone straight through, and those who had eased their horses found themselves left behind. Either because he felt that hounds were getting too close, or perhaps meeting some obstacle, the hunted fox twisted about here; but hounds were never off the line, and from this point onwards he ran in the open. Over the Tadpole Vale hounds ran at a tremendous pace, and horses began to flounder and fumble at their fences. By this time every one felt that they were in for a really great run, and all were riding resolutely, silently, and making every effort to save their horses. Cricklade was passed, and soon the waters of the Isis came in view. Lord Worcester's quick eye saw a cattle drinking-place on the opposite bank, and without a moment's hesitation he plunged in and was out on the far side almost before the tail hounds had shaken the water from their coats and were away after the flying pack. The leading hounds—now running almost mute—had a long lead; but as the line was parallel to the canal, the tow-path gave the field a little relief. Once more the river was crossed, but this time the bridge at Castle Eaton helped the wise ones, though two rash followers—Messrs. Candy and Byng—tried to swim it again and were nearly drowned for their pains. At Castle Eaton hounds were brought to their noses, and Hamblin's good work at their condition told, for where many packs would have been unable to hunt for sheer weariness, Hannibal and Nathan led the pack through gardens and a farmyard, while Lord Worcester and Messrs. Alfred Grace and Candy were

reduced to running on foot, Mr. Pitman following with poor old Beckford in tow. Luckily the pace was slow, and the end was at hand. Mr. Hynam lent Lord Worcester a good stout cob to finish on, and hounds marked their fox to ground in a rabbit-hole in a meadow belonging to a brewer near Highworth Street. When Heber Long, who had gone well on a Badminton-bred grey, counted over the hounds, he found them all on save a couple. It was a very small group at the finish—Colonels Ewart and Dickson, Messrs. Tom Wild and Pitman,” says the writer in *Baily’s*, “Captain Candy and Mr. Byng, as well as Mr. Jenkins, who went through the run—omitting the first ring—on a horse named Gifford, belonging to Mr. Walter Powell of Dauntsey. About a quarter of an hour later the Duke, riding Dyrham, a favourite stout-hearted bay, arrived; so did Lord Arthur and Mr. Granville Somerset.”

This account of the Greatwood Run, published first in *Baily’s Magazine* and afterwards quoted in Mr. Dale’s *History of the Badminton Hunt*, takes its place in the history of hunting with that of Mr. Anstruther Thomson, from Waterloo Gorse, or the Duke of Rutland’s wonderful hunt from Jericho Covert, but neither of these famous chases compare with the Greatwood run in straightness of course, the variety of country crossed, or the distance between the extreme points. It began in the Beaufort country, crossed the Vale of White Horse, and ended in Old Berkshire territory. The distance was fourteen miles from point to point, and twenty-seven as hounds ran. The time was three hours and a half, and during that time there was only one check—of less than eight minutes. When the day was over, horses and hounds were thirty-five miles from home, but they were sent by train from Swindon to Chippenham and so to Badminton, while Lord Worcester travelled up to London that night, to be ready for his regimental duties early the next day. Truly a great performance.

Small wonder that the fame of the pack became so

widely known that the Duke often had invitations to meet in other countries; and on April 24th, 1875, an excursion was made into the New Forest. The charm of spring hunting in that district cannot be exaggerated, but the difficulties for a Huntsman are very great. It was something of a trial to Lord Worcester, for as was often the case in the New Forest in the spring, there were several Masters in the Field, among them Mr. Portman, Mr. Villebois and Sir Reginald Graham, who was at that time Master of the New Forest Foxhounds. The latter, in his *Fox-Hunting Recollections*—published many years later—describes the day's sport in detail, and ends by saying that such a numerous and representative field had never before turned out in the history of the New Forest country, over five hundred riders being present at the meet, with as many spectators out in carriages of every sort, who had gathered from far and near to see the famous pack and its equally famous huntsman. The New Forest was a difficult country to kill foxes in, but Lord Worcester, or rather his hounds, succeeded in doing so after a good day's sport.

Four years later came that brilliant burst from Beckhampton, said to be one of the fastest ever known, which was described by a contemporary writer in *The Field* as follows:—

“Hounds had drawn the first Beckhampton Gorse blank; but found directly they were thrown into the second. Just one faint whimper, then not a tongue was heard, and only the shrill whistle of the Huntsman told that the pack was away, and stealing over the moorland turf, at a pace which called out the utmost powers, and the fastest, to catch them—aye, or even to see them—as they sped on over swelling spur and deep hollow, towards Alton Priors. To the minds of many came those unpublished lines of Whyte-Melville:—

‘How they drive to the front!—how they bustle and spread,
Those badger-pied beauties that open the ball!’

'Ere we've gone for a mile, they are furlongs ahead,
 In they pour like a torrent, o'er upland and wall.
 There is raking of rowel and shaking of rein
 (Few hunters can live at the Badminton pace),
 And the pride of the stable's extended in vain,
 And the Blues and the Buffs are all over the place.'

"Nearly straight, as the crow flies, they raced on over the downs, six good miles and more. There was just one momentary check as they went on to Alton Priors, and a minute after they pulled the good fox down, as he tried to jump the rails out of a road. Twenty-two minutes from find to finish. Of those who essayed to ride the line the hounds ran, Mr. Sloper (a local farmer) had the best of it, with Bob (the First Whipper-in), on the thoroughbred 'Shadow,' in close attendance; and these two were, in fact, alone after the first mile or two. Lord Worcester, Lord Arthur Somerset, and many others, managed to keep hounds in view and be with them at the finish, by aid of the friendly Wansdyke, which runs along the ridge overlooking the indented slopes, where hounds pursued their more arduous course."

This faculty which, where everything else is equal, causes one man to keep with hounds while another loses them, is no less difficult to explain than the instinct which guides ducks and geese and other birds on their migrations in the Spring and back again in the Autumn. It counsels an old coachman piloting children on their ponies; it enables the farmer to keep within striking distance on his fat cob; the first-flight man to save his horse; and, above all, the Huntsman to kill his fox. The 9th Duke of Beaufort possessed it to an extraordinary degree, from the very first day when he hunted hounds to the days when he followed them in his Ford car. I hunted with him in 1912, when he was nearing the end of his long career as Huntsman. I remember well the thrill it gave me when, in answer to

my question as to who was hunting hounds on the following day, he answered "I am." I had heard so much about him, and he had been so very kind to me—a youngster with a pack of foxhounds somewhere in America. We were coming down from Paddington in the train together—he and my wife and I—and we two were thrilled at the fact that we were going to stay at Badminton. I remember that trip so well, though it is more than thirty years ago—his courtesy to my wife—the Duchess's kindly greeting to the unknown American visitors—the pleasant dinner that night and, above all, the next day's hunt.

I had never seen such a turn-out as there was that day at Chavendage House—perhaps four hundred in the Field, most of them in the blue and buff of the Badminton Hunt; some in black; some in mufti; and only two, besides myself, in scarlet. The Duke and his two Whippers-in were in the green livery which the Master and Hunt servants wear; so were George Walters, the Huntsman, and six Second Horsemen, and two runners with terriers; to say nothing of two other laddies, each with a terrier in a bag, on horseback. I rode two of the Duke's enormous horses—I suppose I felt like a feather on their backs.

Presently we trotted off to draw, and hounds had hardly been cheered into the first covert when out popped a fox at the other end. The Whipper-in blew his whistle, and in a minute the big doghounds came tumbling out of covert and were away with a tremendous burst of music. The pilot did not attempt to make a point at first; he tried a bit of dodging; and it was quite half an hour before he decided to face the open: but there were some nice fences to jump and a lot of hound work, which was interesting to watch. I remember thinking what a wonderfully good huntsman His Grace was. He didn't jump a fence—not one—but it was evident that he knew the country like a book; and he was always there if hounds wanted him. Presently they hit off the line across the open, and how they

did slip along! For fifteen minutes we went at top pace, but scent was none too good and they finally marked to ground, after an hour and a half of what I suppose might be called a good "hound hunt."

The next draw was productive of a good fox which stood up for about half an hour, before hounds killed near Eastcourt, after a smashing gallop. About this time, I remember, I changed horses, and got on to another big bay horse of the Duke's, which carried me even better than the first one. It began to rain, scent seemed to have failed, and many of the Field went home. Things looked very unpromising, but the Duke kept on drawing and, presently, out of a bit of "bottom" covert, popped a big dog fox. I was quite near the First Whipper-in—Tom Newman—who holloed him away, and so got a perfect start. There was a big wall in front of us, and the doghounds, running with their heads up and sterns down, flew it in their stride.

"Come on, sir," said Newman, and at the wall we went. The big horse under me flew the wall and the ditch beyond; pecked a bit; recovered; and then galloped on. I never was carried better in my life. For thirty-five minutes they never faltered, and what a pace they did go! The Field got a good start too, the going was perfect, and if there was any grief, I didn't see it. The way His Grace kept in touch with the pack was nothing short of marvellous; for, although he didn't jump a fence, and we of the Field jumped a great many, he was always there if hounds had needed him—once they did; but I remember that old Challenger '07, a stallion hound whose name will ever be famous in the Badminton records—hit it off just as His Grace came up. He turned to me. "That's one of the best hounds I ever bred," he said. "Never makes a mistake. I think we ought to catch this one." Presently we ran out of the stone-wall country, and came to that part where banks, with ditches on one side or the other, separated the enclosures. My horse carried me beautifully and, at the end of about thirty-five

minutes, we caught sight of our fox, dead beat, struggling over a ploughed field just in front of us. Somehow, His Grace was there. He galloped on, cheering his hounds. Up went their heads. They caught sight of their pilot and, in another minute, they had rolled him over. It was a memorable day for me! Almost thirty-five years ago—but it seems like yesterday!

The memories of that first visit to Badminton will always be fresh in my mind. The Duke's great kindness to me; the quiet hospitality. As Lord Willoughby de Broke says in his charming book of reminiscences: "There is no place in the British Isles where the spirit of the chase breathes so naturally as at Badminton. Fox-hunting seems to be rooted in the soil. The stately home almost merges in the kennel. The first thing that meets you in the precinct is always a foxhound, walking about with a self-satisfied air of proprietorship. The horses and the hounds at Badminton are not the evidences of luxury, nor the gratifications of fancy, such as may be a herd of Jersey cows or a stud of racehorses, things that can, after a fashion, be raised or discarded to suit the humour of the moment. At Badminton, the stud and the pack are integral portions of the establishment. Like their Masters, they did not come there yesterday, and they will not be gone to-morrow. They have a traditional home within the very stones of Badminton; their predecessors have been there in some form or another ever since there was a Duke of Beaufort. Kennels and stables in other places might be turned into broadcasting chambers or squash-racket courts. Such a thing would be an offence. At Badminton it would be a desecration."

I remember that, when I was a comparatively small boy, I was taken one day into the Master's Room at the Myopia Hunt Club at Hamilton, Massachusetts, and there I saw, hanging on the wall, the photograph of a man in hunting

kit, sitting on his horse in the middle of a pack of foxhounds. I didn't know much about hounds or hunting in those days, but I was very keen, and, somehow, this picture attracted me particularly. It had a look of genuineness about it: a sort of workmanlike air which somehow appealed to me, and I asked who it was.

"That," said the Master, "is Lord Willoughby de Broke, and those are the Warwickshire Hounds—he sent us a draft not so long ago, and I asked him to send me a picture that we could hang here where everyone could see it. He's a great Master of Hounds, one of the best in England I believe, and they tell me his pack is very good—certainly the hounds he sent to us are about the best we have."

That was almost sixty years ago, but that photograph hangs in the Master's Room at Myopia still, and there are still some of the old members who remember the kindness of Henry Verney, Lord Willoughby de Broke, the 18th Baron, who sent those hounds to help the sportsmen of New England in founding their pack. I never met Lord Willoughby—he had died before I came to England in 1912—but I did stay with Lord North, who had been Joint Master with his father many years before, and who had watched the son build up the Warwickshire pack after he succeeded to the Mastership in 1876.

His son, the late Richard Greville Verney, Lord Willoughby de Broke (19th Baron), has written charmingly about him and I esteem it an honour to be permitted to quote freely from his words. Speaking of his father, he says:—

"In 1876 he embarked upon a career as M.F.H. that was destined to last for nearly a quarter of a century, and to become one of the most famous in the annals of the chase. He accomplished a great work; for it is indeed a great work to raise a moderate pack of hounds to the top of the first class both in symmetry on the flags and in work in the hunting-field. Yet those two things he accomplished. Year after year did the Warwickshire Hounds sweep the board at

the Peterborough Hound Show, winning over fifty first prizes in a comparatively short time. Year after year did he show the very best of sport with them in the hunting-field, carrying the horn himself, following his hounds fence for fence over the stiffest part of the Midlands, and handling his foxes at the end of a good run. Now to some people this description of a life's work might indicate something more like a life's play, people to whom the idea of an M.F.H. probably presents a vision of a good-looking man in the prime of life with a red coat on his back, plenty of horses, plenty of money, plenty of friends, an appetite for his dinner perpetually sharpened by fresh air and a digestion chronically strengthened by continuous horse exercise.

"No doubt the post of M.F.H. has its attractions or so many people would not seek it, though they do so from various motives. A pleasure-loving young gentleman may become M.F.H. in the hope of extracting yet a little more excitement out of life. Another with more insight, may take to hunting a country because the magic letters, M.F.H. confer on him a certain position. Whether weight, prominence and a thing called position are in themselves desirable is open to debate; but it is quite certain that in the county all these things accrue to the M.F.H. In the country towns and in the farm-houses and villages, for one person who could tell you, without stopping to think, the name of the Lord-Lieutenant, the Bishop or the Chairman of the County Council, there are at least twenty who have the name of the M.F.H. ready on the tip of the tongue. They all know him by sight even better than they know their Member of Parliament, whose image is probably only present to the mind's eye of those who voted for him. And if he hunts regularly, they see him constantly, for, in the performance of his duty, he visits, or ought to visit, all parts of his country at least once a month. In short, the M.F.H. is a considerable public figure.

"There is another type of M.F.H. who is actuated by a

sense of duty rather than by the hope of pleasure or the prospect of prominence. And there is also the hereditary M.F.H. whose ancestors have bred the hounds of which he is proud to be Master. But of all these various sorts, it is safe to say that, as a general rule, everyone who accepts the position of M.F.H. sooner or later either gets bored with the trouble, or tired of the expense, unless he really loves foxhounds and enjoys breeding them and watching them hunt. I have indeed known a Master of over forty years' standing who never knew the names or pedigrees of any of his hounds, who took so little interest in foxhounds that he never went into any one else's kennel, who did not study the art of venery very closely, but who was one of the most jovial, genial, popular Masters who ever lived, besides being a thoroughly good fellow in every way. But, as a general rule, the real compensations that the Master gets in return for trouble, expense and abuse, is the breeding of the pack, and seeing hounds of each new generation being entered to the sport of their ancestors. There are few studies so interesting as the study of heredity, especially of horses and hounds. And the advantage of breeding foxhounds is that results come to hand quickly and mistakes can be corrected. An opinion on the value of a particular cross can begin to be formed by the hound-breeder in a few months, while the horse-breeder may have to wait as many years before the mixture of strains is proved.

"My father had everything about him that denotes the M.F.H. He was indicated for the office beyond all manner of dispute, by heredity, by environment and by personal qualification. He was born in the kennel. His father was Master for seventeen years. He had always lived within earshot of the singing of the hounds. He had ridden his pony not only every day in the holidays, but also backwards and forwards to his private school every day in term time, thus acquiring an almost congenital horsemanship that was to last him all his life. The boy was reared in a pure

atmosphere of fox-hunting; so that when he was chosen to be Master at the age of thirty-one, he brought to the position every appropriate antecedent.

"His love of sport, especially of hunting and racing, and his skill both as a rider to hounds and as a winning gentleman jockey over a country, had endeared him to all sportsmen, especially to a certain type of sporting farmer. He was accessible to them all. They were proud of him as being their own property whom neither politics, nor London, nor foreign travel were likely to alienate; in short, he was what was then called 'to the manner born,' and what a purveyor of modern slang would call 'absolutely IT.'

"He made a first-class beginning in his new office by buying a few couples of Mr. Musters' famous pack which, by great good luck, was at that moment for sale. One of these was a beautiful bitch called Skylark, whom with good judgment he mated with Lord Coventry's Rambler. Lord Coventry's Rambler was not only one of the best dogs in his work that ever went out hunting, but he also had a fine pedigree, which included some of the best blood from Sir Richard Sutton and Lord Henry Bentinck. This happy selection produced Ravager, who was a credit to his breeder and became the fountain-head of the best working blood in the Warwickshire kennel, who to their prowess in the field added a strong constitution, fine quality and good looks. My father made another lucky hit with Rambler, mating him with our Charity, who produced four shapely bitch puppies, Rival, Ransom, Rosy and Ruin, destined in their turn to become the most important brood bitches in the pack; indeed it is to this family that my father attributed most of his success in raising the pack to the pitch of excellence in which he left it. This is an instance of the immeasurable value of a good hit. It may produce, as in this case, the very bed-rock of a kennel: you can build from it with confidence; four real beauties are enough to make a pack of hounds in a few years, provided their mates are

carefully chosen. On the other hand, the results of an unlucky hit will take years to eradicate even with the most careful breeding, if indeed it is ever eradicated at all."

The previous Master had used principally home-bred stallions and Lord Willoughby felt that the time had come when new blood was essential. He was always against breeding from an obscure kennel, where perhaps there was only one good-looking sire; so he went straight to the fountain-head, sending his bitches to those kennels which had a tradition behind them—the Belvoir, the Brocklesby, the Grove and the Milton—where there was plenty of good blood. At Belvoir particularly, where Frank Gillard had been Huntsman since 1870, he knew he could rely on getting the best: for the Belvoir pack during Gillard's tenure of office was close to the top. He was a remarkable man, for in those days the entire management of the hunting devolved upon him. The Duke of Rutland did not take an active part in the Hunt establishment. Gillard was, in effect, both Master and Secretary to the Belvoir Hounds. He bred them in kennel; he hunted them in the field; he engaged the servants; arranged the meets; managed the earth-stopping; and organised the puppy walkers; and yet, in spite of his manifold duties, he found time to walk up to Belvoir Castle every night, in the hunting season, even after the longest day, to give the Duke a personal account of the sport. Gillard lived in an age in which, as Dean Inge says, "the greatest idleness of the greatest number," had not become fashionable.

When Lord Willoughby first took over the Warwickshire from Mr. Lucy, he kept Orvis, the latter's Huntsman. Charles Orvis came of a long line of Hunt servants. His father had been First Whipper-in and Kennel Huntsman to Sir Charles Slingsby, whose tragic end when he was drowned by the capsizing of a ferryboat had been shared by his Huntsman. Charles Orvis, the son, had a musical voice in the hunting field and could almost talk on the hunting

horn as well. What a difference these things make in the pleasure of a day's hunting! The younger Lord Willoughby tells us that, under the new régime, the Warwickshire Hounds hunted five days a week; Orvis hunting them four, and the young Master taking a pack across the River Avon to hunt the Alchester woodlands, twenty miles away, every Saturday. It was not exactly play to act as Field-Master four days a week and carry the horn yourself on the fifth—particularly in those days when there were no automobiles to carry hounds or men to the distant meets. So he drove himself, his hounds, his men, and his family, on a great four-horse van.

"My young brother and I," writes the younger Willoughby de Broke, "sat beside him on the box-seat, and the Whippers-in lay at full length on a mattress improvised from the wire-netting spread over the top of the hounds, both men and hounds sleeping soundly on the way home. It was in the Alchester Woodlands, on the estates of Lord Hertford and Sir William Throckmorton, that my father served that apprenticeship in the art of hunting hounds which, in a few years, was to land him in the front rank of gentlemen Huntsmen. The country is by no means wholly under forest—there is plenty of opportunity of seeing hounds work in the open, as well as of studying the methods of woodland hunting."

In 1881 Orvis went to the Holderness and Lord Willoughby took over the hounds himself, continuing to hunt them four—and sometimes five—days a week, until failing health compelled him to give it up, after seventeen years of unbroken success. It was not without certain misgivings that the subscribers had agreed to dispense with a professional Huntsman; but Lord Willoughby had studied the art of fox-hunting, and no man could have shown better sport than he did.

Among his intimate friends in the hunting world was

Lord Chaplin, one of the greatest sportsmen of the Nineteenth Century, who was born in 1841 and lived until May 29th, 1923, through the troublous times that many of his early friends escaped.

"I remember well," says the younger Willoughby de Broke, "the first time that I saw him, when he came to Compton Verney in 1880 to have a day with the Warwickshire Hounds and to look at one of my father's horses called 'The Drone,' that Mr. Chaplin thought likely to suit Lady Florence, whom he had married in 1877. He was then in the very prime of life, and when he came down to breakfast in his red coat—as men did in those days—tall, fair, well-proportioned, the picture of health, he was indeed a handsome specimen of the Anglo-Saxon race. The vision of him and my father and mother driving to the meet in an open carriage and pair is fixed in my mind. It was a fair picture of Victorian country life, when ladies and gentlemen drove in their carriages, and could be seen by all the world, instead of whirling through the villages, hidden away in the recesses of a motor-car which might belong to anyone or to no one.

"They had a good gallop. 'The Drone' was not up to Mr. Chaplin's weight, so he could not try the horse himself, but brought his own. It was an ideal run to show a horse, being short, sharp and decisive, all over a grass country with flying fences. My father was mounted on 'The Drone' who never turned his head, nor made a mistake, and he thought the horse was sold, but Mr. Chaplin did not care about him, and there was no sale.

"Mr. Chaplin was then at the zenith of his power and lifelong popularity. The romance of 'Hermit's' Derby was still fresh in the mind of England; he was the Squire of Blankney; he was Master of the Blankney Hounds; he was one of the county Members of Parliament when to be a county Member of Parliament was a real position of honour; when he rang the bell in his dining-room the



PORTRAIT OF LORD WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE (18th BARON)

butler brought in not one but six bottles of claret for himself and his friends; any single one of which things is vastly superior to being a Cabinet Minister; and the whole affair was carried off in the grand manner that made him a great man in the public eye, while his own geniality and kindness made him deservedly popular with all classes of society. Combined with this magnificence, his stature and good looks invested him with all the insignia that constitute a great personality, a personality that, in the language of the theatre, 'gets over the footlights.' He was one of the last of the fox-hunting country gentlemen who also wielded political influence, such as Lord George and Lord Henry Bentinck, and the fifth Lord Spencer."

"When he died," writes his daughter, the Marchioness of Londonderry, "it was universally felt that the world had lost more than an outstanding figure on the Turf and in the hunting field—more than a great authority on agriculture—more than a singularly picturesque and lovable personality. 'The Squire,' as he was affectionately called by his friends, was all these things. But he was something else. In spite of his vigorous individuality, he was a representative—almost the last representative—of that type of landed gentry whose political and social influence had meant so much to Victorian England. He belonged essentially to that old school of country gentlemen to whom a long line of squires had bequeathed a tradition of responsibility to their country no less than to their acres."

"Times have changed. Heavy taxation and lengthy periods of agrarian depression have given the squire of to-day, where he still exists, small chance of playing a prominent part in politics, or of maintaining that generous outlay on sport and that lavish hospitality which were a matter of course to his forebears. The great country houses where Victorian society met and Victorian politicians discussed Cabinet secrets, have mostly passed into the hands of strangers who belong to a different world and have

inherited no traditions with the acres they have purchased, or they have lapsed into the unfeatured dullness of state institutions. This memoir of Mr. Chaplin has, therefore, the interest of a completed chapter to which there can be no sequel. It tells of men and women and modes of life that will not come again."

It is because of this that I have chosen Henry Chaplin's career as epitomising the story of fox-hunting during the cycles in which he lived. His father died when he was eight years old and he, with his brothers and sisters, spent much of their time with their uncle, Charles Chaplin, who lived at Blankney, in Lincolnshire. He had no children, and Harry, of whom we are speaking, was brought up as his uncle's heir. Blankney was an ideal home for children, and the three boys and their sisters had plenty of chance to indulge their love of outdoor sports. Lord Henry Bentinck, whom Henry Chaplin characterised as "possessing the best brain ever given to the breeding of hounds," was at that time Master of the Burton Hunt, and a near neighbour, and in him the young Chaplins had a perfect counsellor and friend. Lord Henry taught the children everything they had to learn about horses and hounds, and they were proud indeed when he told them that the hounds which had been walked by them were among his best. He was a kind of Fairy Godfather to them all in his own strange way; and Harry, especially, owed him much; and in spite of the great difference in age, there was a close and lasting friendship between them.

Though sport and, above all, riding was naturally the pre-occupation of the children during their holidays, Blankney provided other interests. Charles Chaplin ruled in the autocratic fashion of the squires of his day over his many thousand acres and the picturesque village, but it was a benevolent despotism. The young people were known and welcomed by all the neighbouring tenants and Harry, the future Squire, had the opportunity of acquiring that

intimate and affectionate knowledge of the land and the farmers which was to serve him so well in after life.

From his first school, Harry Chaplin went, with his brothers, to Harrow, and from thence to Oxford, where he matriculated at Christ Church in 1859, and it was while he was there that his lifelong friendship with King Edward VII. began. The Prince of Wales—as he was then—saw his first fox killed on the 27th of February, 1860, while hunting with the South Oxfordshire, then under the Mastership of the 6th Earl of Macclesfield, who presented him with the brush. The Prince's companions from Christ Church that day were Sir Frederick Johnstone and Harry Chaplin, and Sir Sydney Lee records that under their influence the Prince found means of breaking away from the tightness of the leading strings which were designed for him according to a discipline of German pattern. Few people realise that the late King Edward VII. found much pleasure in fox-hunting when he was a young man.¹

As an undergraduate Chaplin enjoyed himself extremely. As long as King Edward VII. lived he remained one of his intimate friends, and the Prince of Wales's set, to which he belonged in his Oxford days, was naturally composed of young men of birth and fortune, whose interests at that age

¹Lady Londonderry tells us that "his grandson did not know that his grandfather ever went out hunting until, in quite recent times when he was at Pitsford, hunting with the Pytchley, he heard of it from Lord Chaplin. On one occasion at Blankney, the Prince had as many as fourteen horses in the stables. Well mounted, he rode hard, and on one occasion pounded the whole field as he jumped a very large stile in a bullfinch which his host in vain shouted at him to decline. Sometimes Mr. Chaplin would mount him, and no day was too inclement. Once H.R.H. was one of several guests at Burghersh Chantry. The meet was not far from Lincoln, and the hounds found at once at a place called Gill's Gorse. The Hunt was taken by surprise. Away went the Prince and the others. It was a tearing hurricane with snow driving in their faces, and they were almost blown from their horses. The first fence was stiff and nearly every saddle was emptied. Whether the Prince shared in the general catastrophe is not recorded. On the way home that day he stayed to have tea with a celebrated old member of the Hunt, Parson Howson of Brant Broughton, who was eighty years old. A short while before he had led the whole Belvoir Field, on a four-year-old thoroughbred, sustaining three falls in the course of the run. His only remark at the end of the run was, 'E's a made 'unter now!' Riding home late one night the Prince overtook Mr. Chaplin's younger brother, Ernest, who was leading his very tired horse and feeding it at intervals with grass by the roadside. Five years later he met Ernest Chaplin at the Ascot Ball. The Prince had not seen him in the interval, and in a moment he asked him whether he had been feeding any more horses with grass!"

were concerned more with the pleasures of existence and especially with sport, than with the academic side of University life. The death of his uncle in 1859 left him to a great extent master of his own actions. He had four hunters of his own at Oxford, and in addition to this there was the stud belonging to a cousin of his which was stabled at Bicester, which he had permission to use at any time that he wished.

Henry Chaplin's mother had died in 1859, and, after her death, Lord Henry Bentinck's friendship was the paramount influence in his life. I have already spoken of the friendship between the two men, and as the young Squire grew up, this friendship became closer, despite the disparity in their ages. Lord Henry was still Master of the Burton country when young Chaplin came of age and the latter continued his uncle's subscription of £1200 a year. Throughout his life he was always ready to recognise the authority of leadership and in the science of hunting and hound-breeding he invariably deferred to the ability and extensive knowledge of his friend and mentor. He was twenty-five when he took over the Mastership of the Burton Hounds, and by that time he had acquired an almost precocious efficiency for the position. He was no lightweight even then, and rather short-sighted, but no one had a better eye for a country or a more thorough knowledge of the work of hounds at every stage of a hunt. His knowledge of the history of the leading strains of blood soon made him a recognised authority in the kennel, and his memory for a pedigree rarely failed him. He had the natural gift of good manners and of the firm but persuasive management of a Field, and his influence was easily applied and as readily accepted. He had succeeded to a large property, and with his tenantry his popularity was complete. Many of the more important farmers in the country were keen foxhunters, and often they themselves bred a good type of hunter, another bond between them and the young Master.

It had always been Mr. Chaplin's aim and ambition to maintain a kennel which should be noted for having the best type of foxhound, and his purchase of the Burton Hounds from his old mentor gave him the opportunity. The Burton had had, in the past, some famous men as Masters—names such as Lord Monson, Squire Osbaldeston, F. J. Foljambe, and Assheton Smith all figure in the annals of the Hunt. Sir Richard Sutton, who succeeded Assheton Smith, was, in his turn, followed by Lord Henry Bentinck, who at that time purchased most of Lord Ducie's hounds, which included 25 couple of Osbaldeston's. Lord Henry had, in consequence, close to a hundred couple of hounds as a foundation, and under his skilful breeding, the pack, representing the best strains of blood in the Stud Book, was wellnigh perfection.

Speaking of him, Sir Reginald Graham says, in his *Fox-hunting Recollections*: "Lord Henry devoted a lifetime and his great talent to the breeding of hounds, but he also understood better than anyone that his labour was in vain, unless they were carefully and judiciously handled in the Field. Perhaps this was never better exemplified than in a letter written to Mr. Chaplin, in which he quotes William Goodall's method with hounds as the best example known to him.

"1. In handling his Hounds in the open, with a Fox before him, he never rated or had them driven to him by his whips; never hallooed them from a distance. When he wanted them he invariably went himself to fetch them, anxiously watching the moment that the Hounds had done trying for themselves, and felt the want of him. He then galloped straight up to their heads, caught hold of them, and cast them in a body a hundred yards in his front, every Hound busy before him with his nose snuffing the ground, his hackles up, his stern curled over his back, each Hound relying on himself and believing in each other. When cast in this way, the Huntsman learns the exact value of each

Hound, while the young Hounds learn what old Hounds too believe in and fly to, and when the scent is taken up no Hound is disappointed. When the Huntsman trails his Hounds behind him, four-fifths of his best Hounds will be staring at his horse's tail, doing nothing.

"The Hounds came to have such confidence in Goodall, that with a burning scent, he would cast them in this way at a hand gallop, all the Hounds in his front making every inch of ground good; while with a poor scent he would do it at a walk, regulating his pace by the quality of the scent; the worse the scent, the more time the Hounds want to puzzle it out.

"On this system the Hounds are got to the required spot in the very shortest time, with every Hound busily at work, and with his nose tied to the ground.

"On the opposite vulgar plan, the Huntsman, galloping off to his Fox, hallooing his Hounds from a distance, his noise drives the Hounds in the first instance to flash wildly in the opposite direction; four or five minutes are lost before the whip can come up and get to their heads; then they are flogged up to their Huntsman, the Hounds driving along with their heads up, their eyes staring at their Huntsman's horse's tail, looking to their Huntsman for help, disgusted, and not relying upon themselves, especially the best and most sagacious Hounds. A few minutes more are lost before the best Hounds will put their noses down and begin to feel for the scent, a second check becomes fatal, and the Fox is irretrievably lost. Often enough, in being whipped up to their Huntsman in this way, when crossing the line of the Fox *with their heads up*, they first catch the wind, and then, as a matter of course, they must take the scent heelways, the Fox, as a rule, running down the wind. This fatal piece of bungling, so injurious to Hounds—is always entirely owing to the Huntsman; it is neither the fault of the whips nor the Hounds; it can never occur when the Huntsman moves his Hounds in his front with their

noses down. In these two different systems lies the distinction between being quick and a bad hurry.

"2. When the Fox was gone, in place of galloping off after his Fox without his Hounds, blowing them away down the wind from such a distance that half the Hounds would not hear him, and he would only get a few leading Hounds still further separated from the body—*Goodall would take a sharp hold of his horse's head, quick as lightning turn back in the opposite direction, get up wind of the body of his Hounds, and blowing them away from the tail, bring up the two ends together, giving every Hound a fair chance to be away with the body.*¹

"It is impossible to overestimate the mischief done to a pack of Hounds by unfairly and habitually leaving a Hound behind out of its place; it is teaching them to be rogues. For this purpose, Goodall had one particular note of his horn never used at any other time except when his Fox was gone, or his Fox was in his hand; *the Hounds, learning the note, would leave a Fox in covert to fly to it. Hounds are very sagacious animals; they cannot bear being left behind, nor do they like struggling through thick covert; but if that note is ever used at any other time the charm is gone; the Hounds will not believe in it; you cannot lie to them with impunity.*² This was Goodall's great secret for getting his Hounds away all in a lump on the back of his Fox, and hustling him before he had time to empty himself. This was his system for getting his Hounds through large woodlands; to come tumbling out together without splitting and sticking to their run Fox. This is the explanation of the famous old Meynell saying, 'In the second field they gathered themselves together, in the third they commenced a terrible burst.'

"3. Goodall's chief aim was to get the hearts of his Hounds. He considered Hounds should be treated like

¹The italics on these passages were made by Mr. Chaplin, showing that he attached especial weight to them.

²See note above.

women; that they would not bear to be bullied, to be deceived, or neglected with impunity. For this end, he would not meddle with them in their casts until they had done trying for themselves, and felt the want of him; he *paid them the compliment of going to fetch them*; he never *deceived or neglected them*; he was continually cheering and making much of his hounds; if he was compelled to disappoint *them by roughly stopping them off a suckling vixen or dying Fox at dark, you should see him, as soon as he had got them stopped, jump off his horse, get into the middle of his pack, and spend ten minutes in making friends with them again.* The result was that the Hounds were *never happy without him, and when lost would drive up through any crowd of horsemen to get to him again, and it was very rare for a single Hound to be left out.*

“It is impossible to overrate the mischief done to a pack of Hounds by leaving them out; it teaches them every sort of vice, upsets their condition, besides now exposing them to be destroyed on the railway line. There is no more certain *test of the capacity of a Huntsman* than the manner in which his *Hounds fly to him and work for him with a will.*

“Goodall, Old Musters, and Foljambe were undoubtedly the three Master-minds of our day. Their general system of handling Hounds was much the same, though each had his peculiar excellence, and each has often said that if they lived to be a hundred they would learn something every year. *All three agreed in this, that it was ruinous to a pack of Hounds to meddle with them before they had done trying for themselves.* The reasoning upon this *most material point* is very simple. If the Hounds are habitually checked, and meddled with in their natural casts, they will learn to stand still at every difficulty, and wait for their Huntsman; every greasy wheat field will bring them to a dead stop, and however hard the Huntsman may ride on their back, two or three minutes must be lost before he can help them out of their difficulty, whilst in woods he cannot ever know

what they are about. (For once the Huntsman can help them, nineteen times the Hounds must help themselves.) It was Old Musters's remark that for the first ten minutes the Hounds knew a good deal more than he did, but after they tried all they knew then he could form an opinion where the Fox was gone, but not before.

"Mr. Foljambe attached the greatest importance to getting his Hounds away together. Before his Hounds were a field away from a wood you might hear him sing out, 'Want a Hound,' and his horn would be going at their tails until he got him, and when got, he would drop back and not care to go near them until they had been five or ten minutes at a check. But if a single Hound was wanting when a Fox was killed, however great the run, he would harp upon it for a month.

"Goodall combined, with his other excellencies in the field, condition and kennel management quite the best.

"Mr. Foljambe was by far the best breeder of Hounds, and had the keenest eye for a Hound's work—nothing escaped him.

"Old Dick Burton was my first Huntsman in the Burton country, and showed great sport for many years. He was the best hand at breaking a pack of Hounds from hares and teaching them to draw, upon which so much depends. He always *drew his wood up the wind*, throwing his *Hounds in fifty or sixty yards from the wood, and allowing them to spread*, so that every Hound should be busy, with his head down looking for his Fox; and had them in his front, making noise enough to cheer them and enable them to know where he was; and in cub-hunting made the Hounds find their cub for themselves and would not have him hallooed at first across the ride. (Nothing is truer than the old saying, 'A Fox *nicely found is half killed*.') He would trot through the hollow covert with his Hounds behind him, and occasionally blow his horn, to wake up any chance Fox, and get Hounds in the thick covert, where they could use

their eyes, as quickly as possible, and then give them as much time as they liked. Nothing is worse than hurrying Hounds through strong covert, or forcing them to draw over again a covert when they are satisfied that there is not a Fox in it. The *blackthorn and gorse* coverts he would always *draw down the wind, keeping carefully behind his Hounds*; by so doing, first, *the Hounds have their heads down, and never chop a Fox*—they do not see him. The Fox hears them, and the wildest Fox is off at once, and the cubs learn to steal away after the Hounds are gone. Second, it enabled him to get the body and tail Hounds out of the covert without hunting the line of the Fox through the strong gorse; brought the two ends together all away on the back of the old Fox—the true secret of getting a sharp burst.

“No man could turn out a highly mettled pack of Hounds, and so young a lot steady from hares as old Dick Burton. In the year 1859, when Hatton country was as full as Blankney with riot, we found in Hatton Wood, at a quarter before twelve, and in the month of February ran from Fox to Fox until half-past three, when all the second horses being beat and fog rising up, I rode amongst the Hounds, coming away from Hatton Wood the last time to see what I had got. To my astonishment, I found my pack consisted of 11 couples of puppies and 5½ of old Hounds!! We had had an old dog kicked, and old ‘Darling’ leading them, then five years old, and showing himself for the first time.

“Old Dick’s principle was to break his puppies by themselves, showing them all the riot he could in the summer, and drilling them severely, but never allowing a whip to FLOG THEM after they had escaped to his heels, or to flog them when coming out of a wood and cutting them off. After being well drilled, he would then take them amongst the cubs and smash up a litter of cubs, blooding them up to their eyes to make them forget their punishment, and to care for nothing but a Fox. Hounds being unsteady for hares when FOXES ARE PLENTIFUL, is entirely the FAULT OF

THE HANDLING. The highest praise that can be given is for a fool to say:—‘We had a great run and killed our Fox: as for the Huntsman, he might have BEEN IN BED.’ A Huntsman’s **FIRST BOAST** should be that all his Hounds required was to be taken to the covert-side and taken home again. His greatest disgrace is, first, to have his Hounds squandered all over the country, and to leave them out; second, to be unable to get them out of the wood; third, not to know to a yard where he lost his Fox—if properly managed the Hounds will always tell it to him.

“The causes that have produced the present unsteadiness in the Hounds from hares were, first:—In 1863, seventeen virtually blank days, that is not finding a Fox whilst there was light to kill him, and rarely a day with two or three Foxes to bring the Hounds to their senses and work them down, left the season’s puppies unbroken.

“Secondly, in 1864 the terrible mistake was made of leaving the Hounds at Home through the cub-hunting season, on account of the dryness of the ground. Regular hunting was commenced with two-year-olds, worse than puppies entirely undrilled; and short days were made.

“Thirdly, in breaking the Hounds in 1865, they were completely ruined by being rated and flogged in coming out of covert to their Huntsman, taught to turn back to the woods, and to remain there, afraid to come out; and, when left to themselves, hunting hares by hours together.

“Fourthly, taking the Fox’s head away from the Hounds. No practice can be more abominable or more Cockney. A puppy that has once fought for the head and carried it home in triumph, trotting in front of the Hounds, will **NEVER LOOK AT A HARE AGAIN**; he is made from that day and marks himself a **STALLION HOUND**.

“Fifthly, neither the first, second, nor third being to be depended upon, the steady old Hounds never knew when to go to the cry, and at last joined the wild Hounds when a large body had got together. To get them right, it would

be desirable to put together all the *two-year-olds*, and all all determined *hare-hunters*, such as 'Saladin,' etc., of the *three-year-olds*, and drill *them by themselves*, then take them into the Wragby Woodlands, where you are sure of a large litter; work the cubs for four or five hours, and smash up three of them, having three or four lads to watch the cubs, so that as soon as they have eaten one you may know where to go and clap them on another LEG-WEARY CUB. The next time their turn is to go out, take them to Blankney and Ashby, and smash up another litter in the middle of the hares. After being hunted three weeks by themselves, then mix them together. It is essential that the steady quiet Hounds should not be exposed to the annoyance of hearing the wild Hounds rated and flogged; it disgusts them, and they will do nothing, merely following, NOT GUIDING, the pack."

Very soon after his purchase of Lord Henry Bentinck's pack Mr. Chaplin went abroad; but before going he made an arrangement with Lord Doneraile to take over the country and the pack at his expense, and the latter came over from Ireland and assumed the temporary Mastership until 1865, when Mr. Chaplin returned from the Continent and took up the hunting in earnest, continuing in the Mastership until 1871, when the country was divided and the new Blankney Hunt was established. Mr. Chaplin hunted the Burton country six days a week, hunting one pack himself twice each week and sending his Huntsman's packs out on the other four; in fact at times there were two packs of hounds in the field in different parts of the country on the same day. At length even Mr. Chaplin's ample exchequer began to feel the strain, and the financial burden of hunting the country six days a week calling for retrenchment, the Master offered to resign if someone willing to hunt six days a week could be found, but no one being forthcoming, the country was finally divided, Mr. Frank Foljambe taking the northern portion and keeping

the name of Burton, and Mr. Chaplin taking the southern division with the new designation of Blankney.

For a time the "Squire," as he was known throughout the countryside, found his Parliamentary duties too exacting to combine with the regular functions of Mastership—although the Blankney country as constituted was hunted only four times a week, so for a few years his brother, Colonel Edward Chaplin, took over the hounds with Harry Dawkins as Huntsman, although the breeding of the pack was always controlled by the "Squire." In 1877, however, Mr. Chaplin was again in a position to take over the Mastership, hunting hounds himself until 1881, when his horn went back into its case for the last time, and in 1883 the hounds were formally acquired by Lord Lonsdale, who had been hunting them for two seasons before that.

In his younger days Mr. Chaplin—like his great contemporary the Duke of Beaufort—was quite unmindful of fatigue. After a long day in the hunting field he thought nothing of making use of thoroughbred hacks and riding some forty miles to Brocklesby in time for dinner and a ball, for in those days hunting men went long rides on the roads: in fact, Lord Henry Bentinck, when he hunted the Burton country from Welbeck six days a week, was in the habit of riding the thirty miles each way regularly, using three hacks going and coming.

Mr. Chaplin hunted a good deal in 1904 and the following years with the Pytchley, staying often with Lord Annaly, who was at that time Master of that well-known pack, and in 1910 he was able to lease a small house, the Hall Farm, at Brixworth, Northamptonshire, close to the Pytchley kennels. The house had been used as a hunting-box. There were nice stables, very handily situated at the back, and here Mr. Chaplin lived contentedly with a devoted manservant who had been with him for years, surrounded by all his pictures—those of his horses and his hounds, and pictures of his children and grandchildren. During this period he

became quite an institution in the Pytchley country—it was there, in 1912, at a Pytchley Puppy Show, that I had the honour of meeting him, when we were both guests of the Master, the late Lord Annaly, who was a particular friend of his.

He became seriously ill in the winter of 1916-17, and at that time the restrictions imposed on everyone by the War were a very real privation to him. The old family friend and Doctor of bygone days, Lieutenant Colonel Charles Brook, came to see him. "Your father would be all right," he said to Lady Londonderry, "if he could be kept quiet; but this House of Commons business is killing him. *It must cease.*"

It required a good deal of tact and some management to carry this out: but one day, just before dinner, a Royal letter was received, sent by a Special Messenger. Mr. Chaplin read it over in silence, turned very red, and abruptly left the room. The next morning he sent for Lady Londonderry before she went out hunting, showed her the letter and said: "I wanted you to see and read this before I refused it." He was exactly like an old war-horse, snuffing the wind and determined to struggle on gamely to the end. What lay at the bottom of his mind was the feeling that it was the passing of another milestone, and that, with the acceptance of the honour, he would pass from public life, and that the "Squire of Blankney" would be no more. When, however, Lady Londonderry left him, it was with the knowledge that a letter of grateful acceptance was being sent up to London.

In her Memoir of her father, Lady Londonderry says: "To Lord Chaplin himself shall be left the task of concluding this chapter on hunting. During the War, Sir Arthur Pearson asked him to dine one evening to meet the gallant blind of St. Dunstan's. After dinner there was an adjournment to another room. Lord Chaplin inquired of his host what he wished him to do. 'Do you want me,' he said,

‘to make a speech? I can talk about sport. I can talk about racing. I can talk about politics.’

“‘Politics,’ exclaimed the men, ‘that’s the last thing we want. Let’s have your experiences of hunting.’

“Thereupon the Squire rose and, to the delight of the poor fellows, who turned towards him with their blind and eager faces, told them the following story:—

“‘After a very long day, latish in the year, I did not get home till 8.30 on a Saturday night and found a man waiting to see me at the Burghersh Chantry. I inquired of my servant, “What is the meaning of this man being here?” “Oh, he has been waiting here since 4 o’clock to see you and he says he *must* see you.” “Well,” I said, “show him into my study.” I went there without changing my things, to find a capital old fellow who had a farm some six miles from Lincoln, and he said, “You know, Squire, I have been waiting to see you all these hours because I have got a fox who lives on my farm and takes from me a lamb every morning and every night. I shall be broke if this goes on. You really must come and kill him.” I told him I’d come the moment I could, but that the appointments were fixed for the next fortnight. “Lord! Squire,” he said, “if I wait another fortnight, I shan’t have a lamb left.” I thought for a moment, and I said, “Will you swear to me that if I come at daybreak on Monday morning you’ll find this fox?” “Yes,” said he, “he has never missed a day or a night for a fortnight.” “Done,” I said; “I will be there as soon as it is light on Monday morning. Meet me at the lane’s end, close to your farm—I’ll be there with a pack.” (I should tell you there was a regular meet somewhere else at 11 o’clock that morning.)

“‘I sat down and got my hound book and marked 14 couples of bitches by name, my best bitches, nothing over four years old, all of which were to be ready. I sent a note over with the marked list then and there, and said, “Feed these 14 couples as early as ever you can, at 5 or 6 to-morrow

morning (Sunday)," adding, "If they (the bitches) are all right in the morning, send only the 12 couples which I have marked with two crosses."

"Then off I went to the meet. I ordered my two horses for myself and I had two whippers-in and horses for them. It was so dark and misty at the hour I appointed, that we had to wait for an hour for light. Then I went round the farm with this old fellow and the hounds, and we got to within 100 yards of the hedge in the last field. That was a hedge that ran straight for 4 miles, a little low hedge of the Lincoln Heath, and then we came to the boundary fence of his farm; and when we were within a hundred yards of this fence, I said: "Now, look here, you brought me out at this ungodly hour and you have not found the fox yet." I cracked my whip for the last time, when up jumped my friend not 20 yards to my left and not 50 yards from the hedge. The hounds all saw him, but the fox turned sharply to the left and ran straight up the side of the hedge. The hounds having seen the fox, were looking for him with their heads up and ran for 200 or 300 yards up the rising ground on the other side of the hedge. I sat quite still and cracked my whip twice and they all swung back to the hedge, caught the line, and away they went, a little up wind, so that they really smelt the fox himself, he was so close to them. For at least four miles they went up this single straight hedgerow, with no one to head him at that hour, as hard as they could drive, going together so that a sheet would cover them.

"At the end of some four miles, we crossed the Lincoln and Brigg road and got on the grass on the side of what we called "the Cliff" running down from the Lincoln Heath to the vale below. I was riding a horse I had bought from Jack Thomson, who was Master of the Pytchley for many years. It came up at Tattersalls and I bought it for Lord Hartington. It was not really up to my weight but I knew I could not be very wrong in buying it. Lord Hartington's



PORTRAIT OF LORD CHAPLIN

From the painting by Linwood-Palmer and A. Talmadge

groom said it would never do for his Lordship, as it tossed its head too much, so I kept it for myself. Well, I assure you, although he was a thoroughbred horse, it was all I could do to keep up with the hounds till we crossed this road.

“The moment we crossed the high road, it was grass all the way to Lincoln, if he turned the right way. Before we had gone 300 yards down the hill, the fox had turned to the left and was running straight +, Lincoln. “Now,” I said, “my friend, I have got you”; because in Lincolnshire, which is, generally speaking, a plough country, the hounds could always run on the grass. Away we went, pointing to Burton and the Lincoln racecourse beyond. They ran faster and faster every minute. We got to the Lincoln racecourse. Off the racecourse, they got on to what is known as the Lincoln Common, straight up the hill again, which we had got down before, and as they flew over the Common I saw my friend, hardly able to crawl, just going through a hedge out of sight into a little lane there was at the top of the hill, quite close to the town. Three minutes afterwards we had run him up to the Castle in Lincoln, and I killed him at the very edge of the Castle walls, 250 yards from my own house in Lincoln.

“I had his head off and gave it to my second horseman when he arrived. I sent it to the old farmer by a hack the same morning and I believe he got glorious after his midday meal. My horse was called “Fountain” and at the end of that gallop there he was, standing with his four legs stretched out, his head hanging down and his tail swinging up and down like a pump handle—nothing left in him whatever.

“I went and had my breakfast, as it was close to my house. There was a meet that day, the regular meet, at a place called Hackthorn. I never had a worse day in my life. Though we found several foxes, and the hounds were all doing their best with their noses tied to the ground, they could do nothing but walk after them. The reason for the

burst in the morning was that he ran perfectly straight for four miles to begin with, up wind, with the hounds close behind him and then we got on the grass for the last five. They could always run on the grass any day in Lincolnshire and he could never get away from them.' ”

“I often think,” he once said, “that Providence intended me to be a Huntsman rather than a Statesman. Horses and hounds have always been a passion with me from my earliest days, and always will remain so as long as I can get on a horse at all.”

Perhaps he was right. At any rate, he ended his career with the same conviction on which he had first based his creed. In the eyes of the younger generation, who had grown up around him, he was a representative of an older England which, though it changes in little things, has continued unchanged in the greater matters of conduct, of good sense, generosity, and faithful service to what is right.

CHAPTER EIGHT

"THE GOLDEN DAYS" IN AMERICA

THE FIRST World War did not take such a toll from the fox-hunting men of America as it did from the devotees of the "Noble Science" in Great Britain. Canada lost many good sportsmen, but although every member of the Masters of Foxhounds Association of America was in the service, not one failed to return. Some packs ceased hunting altogether; but most of them—as I have already said in a previous chapter—were carried on by "old men and maidens," who acting as Deputy Masters, kept the sport alive. On the cessation of hostilities, regular hunting was resumed at once, and the season of 1919-20 saw a great increase in the number of recognised packs.

Fifty years ago, organised hunting was confined, for the most part, to those States adjacent to the Atlantic seaboard; and at least 75 per cent of the recognised packs could be found in Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia. Looking back over the early years, one feels that the Westerners were too busy building up their cities and their business activities to spend the time required for sport; but in the years which followed the first World War this was not true, and the growth of the interest in fox-hunting was very rapid. With this steady growth there came a far more widely diffused knowledge of the sport, and a greater liberality of opinion among those most keenly interested. Forty years ago, there were what might fairly be termed two schools of hunting—the English and the American—and there was much acrimonious discussion as to the respective merits of English and American Hounds. To-day, experience has taught all intelligent hunting men that, with the diversity of climatic

and topographical conditions existing in the various hunting countries of America, which extend practically all over the United States and Southern Canada, from Florida to Quebec, and from the Atlantic States to the Far West, it is natural that the type of hound best suited to the different countries should differ very widely, as must also the method of hunting them. Time and, in many cases, personal contact between the hunting men of both nations has brought an understanding which is bound to endure, and I feel sure that the men who for many years ridiculed English Hounds and the English method of hunting, have come to realise their merit; and that those men who felt that the American Hound was an animal with no manners, no breeding, and no type, are now the first to acknowledge their outstanding qualities of nose and voice. The great improvement made in the breeding of American Hounds to a uniform standard of type has been nothing short of extraordinary; and where one used to see, at the hound shows of forty years ago, four or five animals competing against each other from as many different parts of the country, which varied widely in type, one finds to-day that American Hounds differ scarcely more in conformation and size than do hounds coming from different parts of Great Britain.

The formation of the Masters of Foxhounds Association of America was a step the value of which can hardly be overestimated to-day. From very small beginnings the Association has grown until, at the present time, its membership comprises all the active Masters of recognised Hunts, as well as the great majority of those who have held that office in the past. Through the efforts of the late Henry Goodwin Vaughan, M.F.H., who served the Association, first as honorary secretary for many years, and afterwards as president, there are now on file in its office maps of most of the recorded countries, which serve as a basis for the settlement of any disputes or discussions which may arise.



MR. THOMAS'S IONHOUNDS NEAR OVRHITT'S, NORTH CAROLINA
From the painting by Percival L. Rosseau By courtesy of Mr. Rosseau, Esq., New York

The Association, through its Executive Committee, has full control of all recording of country and jurisdiction over all matters pertaining to fox-hunting. This Executive Committee, composed of the President, the two Vice-Presidents, the Secretary-Treasurer, *ex officio*, and three other members, chosen from different hunting districts, is thus representative of the entire country. This Committee acts under a reciprocal agreement with the Hunts Committee of the National Steeplechase and Hunt Association (which has jurisdiction over all Hunt racing) and the Board of Directors of the Association of American Horse Shows, the three bodies forming a tribunal for the government of sport. The Association has also published four volumes of a Foxhound Kennel Stud Book, which includes only such hounds as could trace their pedigrees to the English Foxhound Kennel Stud Book; and a fifth volume, modelled on the same lines, but containing the entries of all hounds of whatever breed, owned by members of the M.F.H. Association. All *official* Hound Shows—there are usually two each year, where the classification is modelled after the Peterborough Show in England—are sponsored by the Association, and have done much towards the standardisation of the foxhound in America.

Among those packs which felt the influence of this standardisation of the American Foxhound, none was of greater prominence or played a more important part than the pack which was developed by Joseph B. Thomas, which occupies a somewhat unique place in the annals of American hunting, because not only were they in every sense of the word a private pack, maintained solely at the expense of the Master, but they might also be called a "migratory" pack—if that term may be applied to a pack of foxhounds. Mr. Thomas's home country, which was registered with the Secretary of the Masters of Foxhounds Association of America, adjoined that of the Blue Ridge Hunt, and there, on the slope of the Blue Ridge Mountains,

he maintained his breeding establishment, which was in charge of Charles Carver, who at one time hunted the regular pack before Mr. Thomas put him in charge of the breeding establishment, at which the young hounds were reared, trained, and entered by him each year. To *his* judgment was left the selection of the best, which were sent to recruit the regular hunting pack from time to time. The pack hunted some of the year in Virginia, although, during the early part, they were often invited, as a "guest pack" to one of the Northern countries; usually finishing their season in North Carolina.

Mr. Thomas began assembling his pack of American Foxhounds in 1911; the foundation being carefully selected from the small local packs belonging to those Northern Virginia sportsmen who had developed, through many generations, a type of hound suitable to local conditions—especially by virtue of nose, drive, cry, gameness, and what is perhaps best called "hunting sense." From 1911 until 1919, Mr. Thomas's pack hunted the Piedmont and Middleburg countries in Virginia, moving thence into an unoccupied country in Rappahannock County. In 1921, the hounds were taken to Overhills, North Carolina, during the winter months. It is a rolling, sandy, unfenced, woodland country; but in spite of the fact that the climate made hunting possible when the Northern countries were frozen up, Mr. Thomas found it unsatisfactory during the early part of the season, and was glad to accept the invitation of Oakleigh Thorne, Esq., M.F.H., of the Millbrook country, to take his hounds there from August to the end of December.

I shall not attempt to follow the fortunes of the pack throughout its history; but, as I have said, his influence on the development of the American Foxhound was a very great one for he was a breeder of intelligence and a real student of the blood-lines which had been blended to produce his foundation stock. He was the first Master to

maintain, in addition to his regular pack, a "young-hound" pack, as did Peter Beckford and Hugo Meynell in England during the Eighteenth Century. This young-hound pack, with which were included the older stallion hounds, and perhaps ten couple of brood bitches, was maintained at the Home Kennels, under the care, as I have said, of Charles Carver, who sent out an average of over 100 couple of puppies to walk, each year. A strong advocate of "hound for country," the pack which Mr. Thomas ultimately produced was of the racing stamp, without lumber or superfluous bone—a type which he felt was best suited to American conditions. A visit to England in 1922 strengthened him in this belief, although he was among the first to admit that for British hunting, under British conditions, his hounds would not have been as good as hounds bred in the country and accustomed to large Fields and heavy going and much "riot."

One of the great drawbacks to fox-hunting in the Northern United States and Canada is the shortness of the season. The Canadian Packs rarely hunt after November, and often frozen ground and snow prevent hounds from going out at Montreal after the middle of that month. New England, New York, and New Jersey are little better; though the sandy soil of Long Island makes it possible to hunt there throughout the winter irregularly. In Pennsylvania and Maryland and Virginia, hounds usually go out whether or no the ground is frozen hard, though they are sometimes stopped by deep snow, which makes hunting impossible—even for the enthusiasts. To an Englishman, hunting under real winter conditions, with the ground frozen solid, seems out of the question; and yet, to Americans who are used to it and whose horses are shod for it, it holds no terrors, and some of the best days come after the ground as is hard as iron.

The Middlesex Hounds—of whom mention has been made—were a private pack, hunted by their Master and a

professional English Huntsman, on alternate days. With home kennels in New England they had accepted the invitation of the Committee of the Harford Hunt in Maryland to spend part of the season of 1916 at Monkton, where they hunted the country on alternate days with the home pack. The season had been a good one, and both the Harford, composed of American Hounds, and the Middlesex, had shown excellent sport; though few foxes had been killed. Times had changed since the days when the Middlesex hunted the Millbrook country, as they had for years; but the blood which ran in the veins of the pack still traced unsullied to the English Foxhound Kennel Stud Book.

It had been a white Christmas, and there was still snow on the north sides of the fences and the going was hard, except where the sun had thawed it a little in places and made it greasy. But it was good enough to hunt, and when hounds met at "My Lady's Manor," some two miles from the Harford kennels at Monkton, they found a good Field waiting. It was Morris's day. (Note.—Charles Morris was the Middlesex professional Huntsman at that time.) He was hunting the bitches that season, and hounds jogged down the road to Stutton's Wood, where a fox was soon afoot. Scent was excellent, and one turn of the covert sufficed to show the quarry that there was more safety in flight than in trying to dodge his pursuers in the thick undergrowth; so—he broke, and the first Whipper-in holloaed him away as he sped towards Emery's Farm. Hounds came away close behind him and, running hard to the Emery covert, swung back left-handed, skirting Sutton's Wood and driving on past the Manor, which they left on their right. Crossing the Clymnaria road on to the Miles Farm, they were brought to their noses in ploughed land, which gave the Field a chance to give their horses a blow. To this point hounds had fairly flown—a four-mile point, and much farther as hounds ran—in 28 minutes. Morris

was very quiet. If he had tried to handle his hounds at this time, he might well have lost his fox; but he held them on quietly, and presently he was rewarded by seeing a young bitch, named Bracelet (by Milton Brackley), hit off the line near the edge of the covert. He cheered hounds to her, and three minutes later they rolled over a very beaten fox, which was lying exhausted in a furrow near by. The English Hounds were not popular with the Harford Master, who was out that day, and I don't think he ever quite forgave Morris for the end of that brilliant burst.

But the best was yet to come. The Field got their second horses; the Hunt staff changed; and Morris found himself on a home-bred hunter which the Master had brought from New England. It was a lovely day; there was plenty of time left; and everyone was in wonderfully good humour; for the morning burst, short as it was, had swept the cobwebs from their eyes. About 3 o'clock hounds found again in a small covert which lies across the valley from the Guthrie Farm, close to the Jarrettsville 'Pike. Hounds were very close at him here, but he dodged across the concrete road, through the main covert, and then setting his mask for the Valentine Farm,

"He cocked his ears, he upped his brush
And he went upwind like an April thrush,"

heading straight for the Manor Glen Farm, two miles away. Hounds, running with a breast-high scent, fairly flew down the valley, racing with their heads up and sterns down, at the best pace of the day. Right-handed through the Manor Glen woods and out into the meadow beyond they drove, crossing the Little Gunpowder River, and bearing left-handed until they were parallel with the road which runs from the Manor to the Jarrettsville 'Pike. Three hundred yards beyond this point they checked; the Master looked at his watch—"forty minutes to here," he muttered. He

held up his hand to the oncoming Field and they reined in, only too glad to get another respite. Morris made his cast; held his hounds over the road; and watched them silently as they swung on to the grass beyond. Again Fracelet hit off the line; threw her tongue; and this time hounds flew to her, not waiting for Morris's cheer, and took up the running again. But scent, for some reason, was not so good, and for the next mile the pace was slower, improving gradually until they neared the Guthrie Covert. It was very pretty to see the way hounds worked out the line, yard by yard—one might almost say, inch by inch—speaking every foot of the way. Near the Guthrie Swamp they were again at fault, but held beyond it; they hit off the line with a roar and raced into a patch of briars, where they fresh-found their quarry, who fled across the open for the Guthrie Covert.

The Middlesex pack that season had been augmented by the addition of a young draft from Sir Edward Curre's, which had come to the Master as a gift from that grand old Welsh sportsman who did so much for fox-hunting the world over. That day, two bitches, Focus and Fortunate, whose slightly-broken coats betokened their Welsh blood, were driving on at the head of the pack, making hit after hit, at critical points and sharing with Bracelet the honours of the day. Old Farmer Guthrie was in his farm-yard and cheered the diminished Field as they galloped past him.

"He's only just in front of you," he shouted to the Master. "He's a very tired fox. You ought to catch him pretty quick—I hope you do; he's killed a lot of fowls for me, an' I can't afford to lose 'em."

The hunt swept on; scent seemed to improve; and hounds ran at a pace which told heavily on the tired horses. Morris's horse, St. Patrick, was cooked; the Master gave him *his* second horse—a chestnut thoroughbred named Harmanus—in the hope that it would enable him to go on and kill his fox;

and, just as they were changing, the pilot, who looked very beat, stole across the ride near by. Morris blew for his hounds, who came racing out of the covert, and, hitting off the line, drove on again, while the Master and most of the Field watched them disappear in the failing light, their horses too done to move out of a walk.

Late that night, hounds came home to their kennels, Morris and his first Whipper-in walking and leading their tired horses, who could barely get home in the frosty starlight night. *From the Whipper-in's saddle hung a mask.* That was a great day—one of the best that was ever recorded in those parts; for it is seldom that hounds run for two hours and fifty minutes and kill their fox as they did that day. Perhaps that was the last great hunt before the outbreak of the first World War; for the United States joined the Allies four months later.

The first World War brought no lasting ill effect on fox-hunting in America—in fact, exactly the opposite was true. For there was no lack of forage for hunters or food for hounds, and although some of the hunting stables were reduced by the requisitioning of horses which met the requirements of the Army Remount Service, they were quickly replenished by importations from Ireland, as well as replacements from the breeding establishments of the South and West. As for hounds—those packs which were composed of American Hounds were not affected at all; while many hounds which were exported from England during the war helped rather than hindered the quality and efficiency of the Stud Book packs; for many hounds crossed the water which would never have been drafted had it not been for the shortage of hound food in England. On the other hand, certain hunting countries in America had suffered seriously from the increase of wire-fencing, which had replaced the timber boundaries of the grazing lands in many of the Atlantic States, where the “snake fence” and the post-and-rails could fairly be called the

"fence of the country." But America did not suffer financially from the War, and, except for a few isolated cases, fox-hunting came back as strong as ever after the Armistice.

One of the packs which, though in its adolescence before the War developed rapidly after the cessation of hostilities, was that belonging to W. Plunket Stewart, Esq., M.F.H., who to-day holds the honoured post of President of the Masters of Foxhounds Association of America. Mr. Stewart, who was born in the Green Spring Valley, Maryland, began his fox-hunting as a boy. In 1892, he, with his brother, Redmond, organised the Green Spring Valley Fox Hunting Club, and, for a good many years, they carried it on, aided by their neighbours, the elder brother, Redmond, always acting as Huntsman and Plunket as Whipper-in. It was a simple organisation—there were no frills and little formality, but the pack showed good sport and has continued to the present day.

Plunket Stewart resigned in 1906 and moved to Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, where he hunted with the Radnor for a number of years; but the ambition of his youth—to have a country and a pack of foxhounds of his own—was strong, and in 1913 he took over by purchase and gift the pack of hounds which had long been in existence in the vicinity, and had been hunted by Mr. Frank B. Chambers, of Unionville, Chester County, Pennsylvania, bordering on the country already occupied by Mr. Mather's Hounds, the Brandywine. Mr. Stewart bought a farm of two hundred odd acres in East Marlboro Township, built kennels and stables, and purchasing a very good draft from the Brandywine, began hunting Chester County in 1914.

During the War the Master was away on military duties and the entire establishment was kept as small as possible; but once peace was established, Mr. Stewart started in good earnest: engaging Frank Dare—at one time Huntsman to the Morpeth—and bringing more hounds from England;



MR PLUNKET STEWART'S HOUNDS (THE CHESHIRE)

as well as purchasing seven and a half couple of entered doghounds from the Middlesex, which was given up shortly after the War. Among this lot was a stallion hound called Hackler, entered in 1916, by Belvoir Holiday, 1908, out of Mr. Fernie's Hazel, 1910, who was by Belvoir Ragman, 1906, and to-day a great many of the hounds in the Cheshire kennels can trace their pedigrees direct to this great hound, whose blood runs back to the very best that England has produced.

Since that time Mr. Stewart has spared no pains to keep his pack at the highest level. In March, 1931, he acquired by purchase 21 couple of bitches from Colonel W. F. Fuller, who had retired from the Mastership of the V.W.H. (Cricklade) after a successful tenure of office which had lasted over a period of more than twenty years. The hounds so acquired were for the most part descended from the pack which Colonel Fuller had brought with him from the Cattistock, where he had previously been Joint Master with that noted sporting parson, the late Reverend E. A. Milne, many of them tracing back to the most noted sires of the day.

It was less than a year after the importation of these hounds that the Cheshire pack scored what was perhaps the best hunt in their history. In fact, "the Great Lenape Run," as it will always be known, ranks with the best performances of any of the packs which hunt on the Western side of the Atlantic to-day. Let me tell the story in the words of Mr. J. Stanley Reeve, whose chronicles of American hunting will always be found on the book-shelves of every American hunting man's library. It is a typically American story of an American foxhunt, told by a man who was one of the few who got to the end.

"'To brag little, to pay up, to own up, and to shut up, if beaten, are the virtues of a sporting man.' So runs a verse on a calendar some kind friend presented to me at Christmas time. It hangs by my bureau, so naturally I am

more or less compelled to read it night and morning-throughout the year. Fortunately, however, in endeavouring to describe what most of us who were privileged to be in this undoubtedly great hunt with the Cheshire bitches consider probably the best of a decade or generation, one does not have to brag, even a little bit. Comparisons are odious, and all that sort of thing. Hounds ran and ran and ran; horses galloped, trotted, tired, slowed down, blew for a while, then sobbed and quite naturally stopped and refused to go any further. One keen scarlet-coated hero, who had just previously complained of being quite exhausted, himself, was seen standing in the middle of an immense field amongst the hills of Northbrook, sadly contemplating his likewise exhausted steed. He gazed a moment at his horse, then evidently spoke a few kind words of encouragement, but to no avail, and as we laboured past, he moved around behind his faithful conveyance and gave him a great push, but his horse's feet were firmly planted in the rich Chester County soil and he refused to move. Later we heard it was quite some time before his tired companion in misery was able even to be led home, and there were many others in equally dire predicaments.

"A nine and three-quarter mile point (let's call it ten miles) from Saw Mill Wood to Lenape, and forty miles as hounds ran; it's no wonder men and horses were done to a turn, especially when one realises that for the first forty minutes we were going wide open over the grass with practically not a moment's check, and Charles James Fox racing from one end of his home country to another, with the Cheshire bitches fairly snapping at his heels. It was do or die, and this gallant old fox soon realised that scent was fair and somewhat holding in this locality, and that something out of the ordinary must be done if he was to save his precious brush. But fate and the odds, and the Cheshire Hounds were against him, although he did his utmost and made a noble effort.

"If only I was familiar with all this Eastern part of the Cheshire and Western end of the Brandywine country to accurately describe so great a hunt! But I must admit that after the first hour I was fairly out of my bailiwick. However, owing to the kindness of the Master of the Cheshire, who has given me the local names of many of the place through which hounds led us, perhaps the following may give some slight idea of the magnitude of this hunt which took us through six Townships, and is, maybe, the best of a lifetime, and one which has proven the sterling qualities, alertness and intuition of Charlie Smith, Huntsman to this famous pack. Hounds don't do it all themselves by any means; the best of them need help at times; but when they do need it, the assistance must come from a master mind, if they are to carry on and eventually account for their fox, as this pack did so successfully to-day.

"A ten o'clock meet at the Cheshire Kennels might best be described as a lawn meet. The park-like surroundings of 'Chesterland,' with its endless acres of sound turf, bordered by majestic century-old trees, form a setting for hounds quite unequalled in our countryside; and gathered to meet the Master and Mrs. Stewart this morning were:—Mr. John Strawbridge, on 'Joe Spivus,' Mr. Kerr, on 'Swan Creek,' Mr. S. Laurence Bodine, ex-M.F.H., on 'Rexy,' Mrs. Reeve, on 'Giresole,' Mr. James E. Ryan, Mr. Herman Krumbhaar, on 'Northern Light,' Mrs. Bodine, riding 'Quicksilver,' Mr. Charles Cheston, riding 'Grey Coq,' Mr. William T. Carter, on 'Lady Gwenda,' Mr. J. Renwick Kerr, on 'Pat,' Mrs. Low, on 'Guiding Star,' Mr. William Skinker, of Virginia, on 'Arnold,' Mr. Walter Sibley, on 'Agardin,' Mr. Jimmy Kerr, on 'Mentone,' Miss Nancy Penn Smith, on 'Pussy Willow,' Miss Averell Penn Smith, on 'Artie,' Miss Katharine Roosevelt Reeve, on 'Magic Fortune,' Miss Diana Patience Reeve, on 'Bo-Peep,' and Mr. Lawrence Lowell Reeve, on 'Spinster.'

"Hounds moved off promptly at the appointed hour and

as we were slowly jogging through the ride in Upland Wood, Tom Batchelor's melodious view holloa from the West side of covert was like an electric spark to the long cavalcade of horsemen. Popping over the little barway into the great pasture, word was passed along that two foxes had gone away. A few sharp blasts from the Huntsman's horn, a moment's delay, and the pack was nicely settled on the line of a hard running fox; then, bearing left, hounds ran at a racing clip across the big meadows to Pinkerton's, up the hill left-handed again to Chesterland swamp and on to Upland Wood, to swing left again across the meadow to Pinkerton's; but this time Reynard straightened away, and crossing the road to Brooklawn, our pilot was in full view with the pack only a hundred yards behind; but the Brooklawn Wood brought hounds to their noses; then on to the Saw Mill, and turning down country once more and keeping Brooklawn hard on their right, crossed the road, where our fox was viewed by Dan Bryan. Hounds were at fault a moment in the hollow back of the old barn, but a hat held high on the skyline, and a quick forward cast put them straight, and on we galloped down the steep hill through Pinkerton's once more, but out the lower side this time, to get another view of this old dog fox just as he was entering his home covert for the last time in his chequered career. Thinking perhaps he would make another circuit of these coverts, some of us waited in the meadow a bit too long, but on finding hounds had gone out the far side, had quite a gallop to get on terms with the fast flying pack ere they crossed the State Road and bore slightly left-handed to Warren Clark's and on to Webb's Wood. On coming out of the wood, hounds were two fields in front of us, but the low-lying over-grown lands around Wolostone's Mill brought them to their noses again; then picking it out most carefully, they led us more slowly by the pond and over the mill race on grass as green and fine as a lawn; but on

trotting around the grist mill and crossing the road into some rough fields, we were just in time to see them streaming away to Rakestraw's Wood and on to Willowdale, where apparently our fox was headed, as he turned left-handed back towards Unionville. Then crossing the Turnpike, hounds ran with more drive through the Thatcher Farm to Wolf's, and on over John Miller's to Taylor's Clearing, where bad scenting conditions slowed them up a bit; but persevering through Cloud's, scent improved by Haines' Mill, where Mrs. Stewart viewed our pilot crossing the Unionville-Lenape Road. Scent was now getting better every minute, and after galloping through the village of Unionville these hard working bitches fairly flew on through Baker's to the Brandywine River at Wawasset, but over lands with which the scribe is quite unfamiliar.

"It was eighteen miles as hounds ran from the find in Upland Wood to Unionville.

"Reynard was again viewed along the river by Dan Bryan who was faithfully keeping in touch with operations. About half the pack swam the river just below the long Wawasset covered bridge. Reynard evidently had gone to the water's edge; then changed his mind. A hound on the steep laurel-covered hill-side spoke, and racing to her, they set sail up the rocky hill, leaving their poor helpless followers no alternative but to ask their sobbing horses to climb a long flight of concrete garden steps covered by a rustic trellis that led to someone's Summer bungalow. How pleased the owner thereof would have been! One wouldn't dream of asking one's horse to do such a thing in cold blood, but not a horse or horseman hesitated, and, fortunately, all safely reached the top. After this exhausting climb, and on emerging from the wooded hilltop, these energetic ladies led us straight across this historic countryside to Lenape. There was field after field of grass and a variety of fences that are unfamiliar in the Cheshire Country. The Lenape

Amusement Park then loomed in the distance. Reynard the Fox swam the icy waters of the Brandywine to give hounds an anxious few minutes in the dense undergrowth of bulrushes and briars bordering the Park enclosure. Personally, I quite expected hounds to account for their fox here in this thick mass of reeds, something sort of told me so, but I was wrong. There were a few tense moments; the Master called for everyone to keep quiet, and hounds seemed to be expecting something to happen, but it didn't. The appearance of the Hunt, however, apparently interrupted a pair of lovers parked in a Ford car in this most peculiar place. Hounds spoke again and immediately swam the quite formidable-looking stream. Charlie Smith was looking for a place to cross when a female voice from the Ford said:— 'You can cross up there on your left.' It was deep but navigable, and much to our surprise the couple in the car followed us over.

"Hounds ran on through the bungalow settlement adjacent to the Park; sniffed at a merry-go-round; led us under the scenic railway to a very slippery road, around a sharp corner, over a narrow stone bridge, and then I didn't see hounds again until we had crossed the main Lenape bridge and were clear of the motor infested highway; and urging our tiring horses up the long hill towards Tom Clark's farm.

"Several good horses and gallant sportsmen gave up the chase in this historic and much fought over neighbourhood, but Reynard was still pursued by the Red Coats, just as his long-forgotten forebears undoubtedly were by those Red Coats fighting for George III., and led by Lord Cornwallis, so many years ago. Birmingham Meeting House, with its lovely Pines and Cedars, was just across the river; but, fortunately, the Red Coats did not need its services as a field hospital to-day. Casualties were few, but a quick-working farrier could have filled his leather breeches' pockets with dollar bills instead of shillings, had the shades of a British

wagon train put in an appearance. Many shoes were cast, especially hind ones.

"During the early stages of this great hunt I had been under the impression that our pilot was a visitor from the Brandywine Country, but having reached practically the centre of that country and turned back, as it were, there seemed every prospect that hounds eventually would lead us somewhere near home, providing our fast tiring horses could stand the strain. From Tom Clark's to Baker's Wood, via the Martin and several other farms, this good pack then sank the vale towards Wawasset, and crossing the road hard by the little white school-house, led us up another long punishing hill, and ran on towards Marshallton; but keeping Miss Rawle's on their right, took us with a good cry to the big fields beyond Northbrook and quite near the bronze tablet marking the home of 'Indian Hannah, the last of the Lenni-Lenape Indians.'

"Undaunted by the icy waters of the Brandywine, this stout, but evidently tiring fox no doubt recognised the savage cry of his pursuers meant business, so plunging into the river, swam across for the third time. The waters here were too deep and wide for the small Field that remained to negotiate, thus forcing us to ask our exhausted horses to gallop down the road and through the Northbrook bridge. It was a bit of a detour, but couldn't be helped.

"Galloping (it seemed forever onward) we went through the country somewhat Northeast of the 'Groundhog College School House,' then bore West again, hounds nearly running away from us until reaching the Brandywine, which our fox crossed for the last time; the pack swimming the river on our right, as we galloped through the Glen Hall covered bridge. Hounds were at fault when we caught them, but casting themselves, raced away before even Charlie Smith, who had been in the same field with them all day, could get to them. His great horse, 'Sweetmint,' was done; 'Sweetmint' who had won the applause of hundreds of

thousands in his racing days, was now defeated by a Chester County fox, and probably the best pack of hounds that England ever sent to America. Defeated, but by no means disgraced; nevertheless, it was a heart-rending sight to see this great horse being led home beaten, and I know the Huntsman would have been delighted had he been able to finish the day on his old favourite. All is fair in love and war, so Charlie changed with Tom Batchelor, the first Whipper-in taking 'Glen Welby,' another stout-hearted thoroughbred, to see him through this record-breaking day.

"The Field by now had dwindled down to the Master, on 'Gay Charles'; but poor 'Gay Charles' was anything but gay, owing to a severe cut and the loss of considerable blood, although still doing his best; Mrs. Stewart, who had been carried brilliantly on 'Menelaus,' seemed stronger than the rest of us; Mrs. Reeve on 'Giresol,' still able to raise a gallop; Miss Kitty Reeve on 'Magic Fortune,' who was nearly done; and William Skinker, from The Plains, Virginia, superbly mounted on the Master's 'Arnold'; followed by the poor scribe on his staggering 'Spinster.' 'Northwind,' who had carried me in his usual faultless style until reaching Wawasset, had, unfortunately, pulled a shoe. Then changing with Gallagher, and taking 'Spinster,' who had been ridden by Lawrence Reeve through the first and fastest portion of the run, until Lawrence had become exhausted and given his horse to Gallagher.

"On reaching the top of Lawrence's Hill, we could see hounds racing ahead, evidently close on their fox's brush. Funk's Farm and Wriggins's vanished behind us with the pack still well in front, throwing their tongues for dear life and disappearing over Passmore's Hills.

"'Gay Charles' could go no further, and Mr. Skinker kindly gave the Master his 'Arnold,' whereupon the ladies and Mr. Skinker most reluctantly left us to wend their weary way homeward.

"There is a poem by Will H. Ogilvie, entitled 'Alone with Hounds'; it was not quite that, but one must admit to a great thrill all the same; there were only the three of us left, with Charlie Smith well out in front towards the Burnt Chimney, cheering his fast-flying beauties on, and with the golden notes of his horn fast fading away in the little wooded valley below. The Master and I trotted on to Powell's Hilltop, listened a moment, then made our way down its honeysuckle-covered side to the brook in the meadow at the foot of the hill, just as Charlie came up to his well-rewarded hounds at the kill.

"It was indeed a great satisfaction to watch this finished Huntsman, after five hours and twenty minutes of most brilliant work, break up this gallant but beaten fox, and after congratulations all around,—Plunket Stewart and his Huntsman certainly deserving of theirs,—our little party rather silently led our tired horses up the road towards home, surrounded by this really great pack of English Hounds."

It must have been a great hunt and certainly goes to disprove the contention by some American Masters that pure-bred English Foxhounds are unsuited to American conditions. That they are unsuited to *some* American conditions is undoubtedly true; but it must be remembered that America is a vast continent, with hunting countries that vary in topography and climate to a far greater extent than do the hunting countries of Great Britain and Ireland. Mr. Stewart's country is not dissimilar from parts of the Cottesmore. There is a very high percentage of grass, as can be seen from the foregoing description of the "Lenape Run," and scenting conditions are not unlike those which obtain in many of the grass countries of England. Mr. Stewart has been lucky enough to obtain drafts from the very best of what might be called the Provincial countries; and by judicious breeding he has developed a pack which would be difficult to beat (on the flags or in the field)

anywhere in the world to-day. The late Captain Esmé Arkwright of the Oakley, sent him two stallion hounds—Hospodar '28, and Goldsmith '31—both Champions at Peterborough, which have brought fame to their breeder throughout America, where their get is breeding on well to-day. These two great stallion hounds, and the twenty couple of bitches from the Cricklade, of which I have spoken above, are not the only importations which Mr. Stewart has made; Brandon '35 came from the Cattistock not so many years ago, and in his veins runs the blood of that great doghound, Tiverton Actor '22, and so back to Four Burrow Whipcord '05, and the very best of the old Fitzhardinge stock.

The Middlesex pack, developed through years of careful breeding, is no more; and the Brandywine, which for many years hunted the country east of that now occupied by the Cheshire, is now made up of American Hounds. But, in Northern New York, the Genesee Valley Hounds have been revived by Mr. William P. Wadsworth, a son of that grand old sportsman of whom mention has been made before; and in Vermont, the Shelburne Hounds, founded in 1904 by Mr. J. Watson Webb, show brilliant sport during their short season, close to the Canadian Border. These packs, together with the Chagrin Valley, with kennels near Cleveland, Ohio, are composed entirely of hounds which trace their pedigrees to the English Foxhound Stud Book, and the same is true of one or two small packs in New England and the Middle West, which have started up in recent years.

All the other packs which hunt countries in the United States are made up either of typical American Hounds, whose Masters would claim that no drop of English or Welsh blood had been used in their kennels for many generations; or of cross-bred hounds which are the fruits of the breeding of those Masters who believe that the blending of the two breeds produces a type of hound best suited to their countries.

This book is a chronicle of what has happened, and not a discursive treatise on the comparative merits of English, American, or cross-bred hounds; but it is perhaps natural that a great majority of those packs which hunt American countries to-day should be composed of either American Hounds or those in which there is a small percentage of English blood.

In Canada the case is different. The Montreal pack, founded in 1826, has always maintained its numbers and efficiency by drafts from the Mother Country, and while the Rugby Hound Sale was still in existence, there was scarcely a year when the names of the Montreal Masters were not among the list of buyers. Hunt servants too have always come from England, and the whole establishment has been carried on in exactly the same manner that it would have been at home. Of course, the severity of the climate, both in the Montreal country and also at Toronto to a slightly less degree, is very much against a long season; but where the Master and the Field are keen, and the country is rideable and well-foxed, one may be very sure that hunting is bound to flourish, and this is true of Canada, no less than of the Mother Country. The Masters of the Canadian Hunts have always been members of the M.F.H. Association of America—in fact, it is almost an unwritten law of that body that one of its Vice-Presidents should be a Canadian. Fox-hunting suffered but did not cease during the first World War; though there were many hunting men from both districts who never came back. But hounds went out regularly all through the four years of War—carried on, as were the American packs, by “old men and maidens.” Just what has happened in Canada during these last six years I do not know; but I feel quite sure that the spirit of fox-hunting is far too strong on both sides of the Border for its activities to cease or even to be seriously dimmed.

In the United States, where Mr. W. Plunket Stewart has

succeeded to the Presidency of the Masters of Foxhounds Association, hunting has gone on with little curtailment, and now that Peace has come at last to a war-ridden world, I look for very considerable increase in the hunting activities of the Western Hemisphere.

CHAPTER NINE

BRITISH FOX-HUNTING SURVIVES TWO WORLD WARS

DURING THE early years of the present century fox-hunting seemed to have reached a pitch of popularity which bid fair to equal the "Golden Days" of the past. I remember well a dinner which Lord Lonsdale gave to over two hundred Masters of Hounds of the British Isles, a few days after the Peterborough Hound Show of 1912—they were all there: Lord Galway, Lord Middleton, Lord Annaly, Earl Bathurst, "Parson" Milne, John Straker—Masters from all over England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. It was a wonderful gathering. I happened to be in England at the time and was fortunate enough to be one of the guests on an occasion which, I think, must have been unique in the history of fox-hunting.

In the Provinces, the less important packs had improved in the quality of the sport shown and in the esteem in which they were held by the dwellers in their respective "countries," and the Fields, ever on the increase, were generous in their financial support. The old family packs, like the Duke of Beaufort's, the Belvoir, the Berkeley, the Milton, and the Brocklesby—to name five of the most important—were still supported by the families whose property they had been for many years; while in the Shires the sport shown rivalled the great hunts of the Nineteenth Century, so often called the "Golden Age of Fox-hunting."

Listen to this account of one of the great runs, written by Mr. Mostyn Pritchard, who was one of the six who saw the finish:—

"Saturday, 25th February, 1911. Mr. Fernie's at Horinghold. A morning towards the end of February, the sky

slightly overcast, and a warm moist springy feeling in the air; a hunting morning, indeed, or I am much mistaken.

"The Cottesmore are at Burton, and temptation is strong in that direction, but Mr. and Mrs. Fletcher, Millie and I went our way to join Mr. Fernie's pack at Horninghold; Millie on 'Curling Pin,' and I with a new quad. between my knees and 'Week End' in reserve.

"Of Horninghold one never expects great things, as the proportions of the Field testify this morning, but in February foxes are strong, and you may find a stranger who has come from afar; if so, look out for a bit of fun. Of such calibre undoubtedly was the big sandy fellow, who stood up so gallantly before Mr. Fernie's bitch pack this memorable day. But to my story.

"It is barely a quarter-to-twelve, as in full view of the Field our pilot shakes the inhospitable dust of Hegg Spinney from his brush, and sets his mask for the Stockerston Woodlands. Hardly promising this! and many of us take our time as Thatcher lays his hounds on the line, and they disappear over the brow to the left of the Uppingham Road. But we're wrong to-day, though; for, by the time Muckleborough Spinney is behind us, the pack are crossing the brook into Cottesmore territory, and we bustle along on the certainty of catching them in Wardley Wood or Stoke End, as we have done many a time before.

"But no, by Jove! they hesitate a moment below Beaumont Chase, and before we have time to make up the ground they are over the brow and heading for Uppingham, with Thatcher and a few lucky ones in close attendance. You cross the Turnpike to the left of the town, and after another mile catch them at Glaston, cursing your stupidity for a run lost. But calm yourself, my friend, this is merely the beginning, and you'll be glad of that extra bit in hand before many more miles are put behind. There is no time for a breather yet, for hounds have turned sharp to the left, and there is the road and bottom ahead; a gate leads from



MIR IIRNIE'S HOUNDS AWAY FROM COVIRT

From the painting by Lionel Fd cards, R I

the former, and two more fences bring us down to the latter, where for a moment the bitches look like giving us the slip. A practicable place is quickly found, and Thatcher gives us the office over the rails and water, and then another mile of good going and easy fences bring us up to Preston. So far the pace has been good, and hounds have come along with hardly a check; they pause by the village, but Thatcher lifts them across the road to hunt more slowly down to the brook beyond; two nice fences and the bridge handy to give us a good place with the pack as they take up the running on the big pastures below Manton Gorse. That well-known covert affords no shelter for foxes this year, and leaving it to their right, the bitches drive on over the grass as if they had only started. 'Hullo! here's that belt of trees we see in Giles's picture.' We crawl in over the ruined wall and jump out beyond, getting the worst of the turn as they swing away right-handed over the brow, and come down to the Manton brook at an ugly place; but there is no time to be lost when they run like this. Boore has his nippers out in a twinkling. 'It isn't a picture when you *have* cut the wire,' Massey suggests, and Thatcher seeing the wisdom of the remark, jumps the fence to the left, and crossing higher up joins his hounds as they set their helm for Orton Park Wood, three good miles ahead. Here's a picture for you now! I'll stake my hat you can't beat this! Eighteen couple of those fleet little ladies racing ahead; plenty of room to gallop and jump, the pink of Leicestershire before you, and fourteen good miles already behind. This may fall to your lot but once in a lifetime!

"There's a scent in covert, too, and the pack drive through so quickly that Thatcher is only just in time to catch them beyond, and some of us who follow his boy down past the right of the wood nearly get left for our pains. Three fields beyond they are at fault, and for a moment it looks as if Lady Wood were the point, when a timely holloa on the brow enables Thatcher to get them

going again, and we thank our stars that the pace is easier to Knossington; there is a slight pause by the right of the village, and as they carry the line into the spinnies you have time to look around. Sixteen miles I make it, and a good many have dropped out. Falls have not been very numerous, though young Thatcher has taken a nasty one, luckily without ill-effect. His father has been cutting out the work, riding and handling his hounds in the most brilliant form. Messrs. Gough, Massey and Mason, Major Schofield, Captains Holland and Porter, Messrs. Fletcher, Mawson, Gilillan and several others are there, but of the fair sex only three have come with us to this point, the two Miss Maudslays and Millie, while Mrs. Fernie, Mrs. Fletcher, Mrs. Gough, Mrs. McKenzie and others join in here. For two or three minutes hounds can be heard running the line in covert, and then Boore's cheery holloa brings us all scampering up the centre ride. Mr. Fernie is very anxious not to go on with a fresh fox, but the fellow viewed away from the top end is undoubtedly the hunted one, and, moreover, answers closely the description of our original pilot; so we plod on by Cold Overton, praying for those second horses that don't somehow turn up. Hunting in a right-hand ring, the pack come around to the left of Knossington village, and then settle down to run their hardest. 'Really, this is beyond a joke!' You'd sell your soul for a fresh horse; it's a sheer impossibility to go on with this! Millie pulls 'Curling Pin' up, it's twenty miles she has come if it's a yard, and the mare has carried her well; but there is an end to all things, and she turns reluctantly homewards.

"A moment later I get 'Week End,' and push on with Captain Holland to catch them near Owston cross-roads. With the far-famed Marfield Vale before him, our gallant pilot looks like going forever, but the ladies have pushed him hard these last few miles, and one field short of Peek's Covert, he doubles to the right for Somerby. Surely the

end cannot be far off now! They are actually in the same field with him by the village, but a change has come over the sky, and under the heavy black clouds scent has dwindled to nothing. 'You *must* handle this fellow,' I remark, as I slide off to unfasten a gate for Thatcher, but he doesn't seem any too confident. There are a dozen of us only in attendance now, the lucky ones who got their second horses, but the pack are on their noses as they cross the bottom by the Somerby-Owston Road, and are pulled up altogether on the two big fallows beyond. On the grass again the line is clearer, and they push along merrily over the road and up the hill; on the top road there is news of our fox, and we jump out at an easy place (we want them easy now, by Jove!), and keeping along the brow, get a glimpse of him to the right of Cold Overton. A mile further, Jack Boore, still on his first horse, has viewed him again, heading for Orton Park Wood; Thatcher lifts the bitches along the road, and hitting off the line, they hunt slowly down the left of Lady Wood and forward still, till the fork roads, short of Braunstone, are reached. There is not a murmur to proclaim a line beyond the road, so Thatcher takes them back up the last field to where there is a haystack and a drain. Besides the Huntsman and two Hunt servants there are six survivors: Mr. Gough, of Belton; Captains Porter and Holland; young Mr. Greaves, of Queenby; a farmer and your humble servant, while young Mr. Murray-Smith turns up a quarter-of-an-hour later. But the finale is yet to come. Thatcher is standing on the stick-heap by the drain, bitterly disappointed at the disappearance of his beaten fox, when the hounds feather up the furrow; he is off his perch in a second, cheering on the pack on foot, and handles his fox a moment later. And so, after all, this remarkable hunt ended with blood, and in this respect holds the advantage over the great Waterloo run of the Pytchley, and the Greatwood run with the Duke of Beaufort, with which it has been compared in the papers. I have since talked it over with Thatcher, and

worked out the points carefully on the map; and not allowing for small deviations, I cannot make it less than twenty-eight-and-a-half miles. The distance between the farthest points, i.e., Hegg Spinney and the point where our fox turned short of Peak's Covert, is approximately nine miles by crow-fly. A great deal has been said about the change of foxes, for it seems almost incredible that one fox could have stood before hounds for all that distance, but I doubt if they changed in Orton Park Wood, and it was undoubtedly a hunted fox they took from Knossington. Foxes lie out at this time of year, and they may have picked up a fresh one anywhere, but Thatcher thinks that in all probability he killed the one he started with. Be that as it may, he hunted his hounds in masterly fashion, and may be congratulated on having scored a run, the like of which is not to be found for many years back in the history of fox-hunting.

"Postscript:—the time from start to finish was about 3 hours 20 minutes. It is a curious coincidence that this run began close to the spot where Colonel Anstruther Thomson whipped off his hounds in the dark at the end of the Waterloo run in February, 1866."

This, perhaps, was Thatcher's greatest hunt, though he had many which made history in the Fernie Country, where he had succeeded "Charles" Isaac, in 1907. He and Frank Freeman, of the Pytchley, were unquestionably the two greatest Huntsmen that the Twentieth Century has produced—that is, the greatest Huntsmen of the "Flying Countries." If one considers the great amateurs like the 9th Duke of Beaufort, Mr. E. P. Rawnsley, of the Southwold, and such outstanding professionals as Will Dale, of the Badminton, Jim Smith of the Brocklesby and Charles Sturman, of the Heythrop—all of whom made outstanding records in the countries in which they carried the horn—one could count many men whose names must ever be famous in the annals of hunting in of England.

Frank Freeman came to the Pytchley in 1906.' He had been First Whipper-in at the Belvoir and the Cheshire, and Huntsman at the Bedale, and when Lord Annaly, who at that time was Master of the Pytchley, was looking for a Huntsman to fill the place of John Isaac, who had retired, the late Lord Chaplin advised him to engage Freeman.

I wonder if he told him the story, which is quoted in the Memoir of Henry Chaplin, of which I have spoken before: "I was rather late one morning in arriving at a gorse covert in the Belvoir Country; Coston Covert, I think it was, into which the hounds had just been put to draw. I had to come from Barleythorpe, and saw at once it wasn't the Huntsman who was in the covert with the hounds, and I was told it was the First Whipper-in, Freeman, who had never hunted them before, the Huntsman being disabled by a fall the previous day. I knew him quite well, so I went into the covert to see if I could help him.

" 'So you are handling hounds, I understand,' I said, 'for the first time to-day?'

" 'Ah, yes, Squire,' he said, 'and I can do nothing with them.'

" 'Well,' I said, 'I've been at it all my life, and perhaps I could tell you one or two things which might be useful.'

" 'I should be most grateful if you would,' he said.

He had been blowing his horn whenever the fox crossed a ride, with the same note that ought only to be used when he has gone away, or he has been caught.

" 'So I replied, 'Put your horn into its case to begin with, and don't blow it again, like you have been doing, till your fox has gone away, or till you want to draw your hounds out of the covert, which you should do with one or two long-drawn notes; or till you have caught your fox and got him lying dead before you. Then you may blow the note you've been using as long as you like. That is one thing.

" 'The next thing is this: when you've gone away with a fox and come to a check, don't go to help your hounds

till they ask you, and the way you will know they are asking you is this, and these hounds (who at that time were constantly interfered with) will ask you immediately because they are accustomed to it.

“‘ You will see them standing with their heads up, wagging their sterns, and doing nothing to feel for the scent or to help themselves. When you see that, go straight into the middle of the pack, turn your horse, say “cop-cop” or anything you like, trot off, and they will go with you like a flock of sheep.

“‘ Trot gently up to wherever you think your fox is most likely to have gone and if you are lucky to hit off his line, they will go all the easier with you the next time. Now,’ I said, ‘ that is enough for to-day, and I shall stay out to see how you get on.’

“I stayed out until quite late in the evening. It was in the Spring. He was fortunate enough to hit off his fox the first time, and before evening the hounds had taken to him completely, and he could do anything he liked with them.

“He was so nice and modest-minded a fellow that he came half a mile out of his way to meet me on my way home, and when we met, he said, ‘ I couldn’t go home, Squire, without thanking you for what you told me this morning. The ambition of my life is to be a Huntsman. I am most anxious to learn, and you are the first person, gentleman or Huntsman, who has ever told me a single thing.’ ”

Small wonder that Lord Annaly followed Henry Chaplin’s advice. He made no mistake. Freeman’s success was instantaneous. He had, as Guy Paget so aptly put it, “a one-track mind.” He came of a long line of Hunt servants; both his father and grandfather were Huntsmen before him; and he had a thorough grounding in his profession, for he had started at the very bottom and worked his way up to the top, after seventeen years of apprentice-

ship, in which he had served under eight different Masters and six Huntsmen. Captain Pennell-Elmhirst—"Brooksby" of *The Field*—acknowledged to be one of the best hunting correspondents of modern times, when asked who he thought was the greatest Huntsman he had ever ridden behind, placed Tom Firr and Frank Freeman at the top.

"Those men stand out by themselves," he said. "I hunted with them both in their prime. Perhaps Firr was the better rider; but the Quorn is a far easier country to cross than the Pytchley."

I first met Frank Freeman at the Milton Puppy Show in 1908, where he and the late John Watson, M.F.H., and I were judging the Fitzwilliam young entry. I knew that he had a great reputation as a Huntsman and was much interested to hear his views regarding the entry which came before us. But he hardly said a word, though I noticed that he invariably liked those hounds which had plenty of quality, even if they were on the small side. Four years later I visited the Pytchley kennels at Brixworth, and I noted again that all the Pytchley Hounds were full of quality, though I thought lacking in size and substance. A few days later I had my first and only day with the Pytchley—not an outstanding one, perhaps, but most interesting to me. The Master, Lord Annaly, whom I had met several years before, was most kind, and told me to go anywhere I wanted which enabled me to see Freeman at work at close quarters. The bitches were out that day, as smart and quick a little pack as I have ever seen, and as keen and savage at a fox as one could imagine. They chopped a fox in the first covert and a brace in the second, but the fourth fox that we found gave us a nice burst before he went to ground. We did get a fair sort of a hunt before the day was over, and it was a joy to watch Freeman at work. His voice wasn't particularly attractive or musical, but he had the confidence of his hounds, and it was easy to see they would do anything that he asked of them. Like all great huntsmen his one

thought was for the pack, and to give them the reward they so richly deserved at the end of a hard day nothing was too difficult of accomplishment, no hours too long. He must have been a wonderful schoolmaster too, for his Whippers-in were always in demand, and many a Huntsman whose career in his profession has been successful had his early schooling under Frank Freeman, though the curriculum was a hard one.

For a decade, he served under one of the greatest Masters that the shires have ever known. Lord Annaly was perhaps the most popular Master the Pytchley has ever had. Good looking, a fine horseman, with nerves of iron that made it easy for him to keep at the forefront of a hard riding Field, he was always courteous, and never indulged in bad language or lost his temper in the Field; but woe betide anyone who disobeyed his orders or neglected to pull up sharp when the Master's hand went up. It must have been a great help to have a Master of the calibre of Lord Annaly in control, and to know that his efforts to show sport would be helped in every possible way; for no Huntsman can do his best if he is interfered with by an over-impetuous Field, who cannot know or understand the inner workings of his mind or the sensitive nature of the tool which he is using—a pack of hounds.

I have spoken of Freeman's liking for small, active hounds, in preference to the heavier type generally prevalent in the fashionable countries and winning on the flags at Peterborough at that time. In 1912, the revulsion against the heavy type had already begun, and a magazine called *The Foxhound*, edited by Major H. de M. Leathes, assisted by an Advisory Committee composed of Masters and ex-Masters of international reputation, headed by the 9th Duke of Beaufort, was inaugurated, whose avowed object was the improvement of the modern foxhound, with especial emphasis on the breeding of "type for country." Its publication created a great deal of interest in the hunting

world, and those Masters of the outlying districts who had developed hounds which—as one famous Master put it—could always hunt and kill foxes, although they were sometimes not good looking—found their stallion hounds in ever-increasing demand.

Then came the first World War, and during the years when England was short of foodstuffs, the enemies of fox-hunting seized upon the national emergency as a reason for urging the complete destruction of foxhound packs. It was clearly pointed out at that time by various members of the M.F.H. Association that to do away with fox-hunting would be to do away with the supply of horses necessary to provide the War Office with mounts to carry the cavalry, as well as to draw the guns of the light artillery and the supply wagons: and perhaps no one pointed this out better than Lord Chaplin in a speech to the Masters of Fox Hounds Association, in 1918.

“Mr. Chairman, my Lords, Ladies, and Gentlemen,” he said. “If I may be permitted to do so, I should like to make a few remarks on the first occasion on which it has ever been my privilege to attend one of these meetings. Colonel Hall Walker has spoken of the necessity of keeping up the supply of horses in this country. Let me just put before you one fact which will show you (it is impossible of contradiction) that the supply of horses must be maintained, and that hunting is justified ten times over. At the commencement of the War, when the War Office made their first levy for the supply of horses which they absolutely needed (I know all about it, for I served on the Committee appointed by Lord Selborne to consider that very question, and we had representatives of the War Office there), we had the Director-General of Remounts himself present before us, and what we found, and what I know to be the fact, is that in the very first levy which they made after War was declared, in a little over a fortnight they obtained something like 150,000 or 170,000 good horses at that time for

their purposes; whereas, if it had not been for hunting and racing, they would not, in all human probability, have succeeded in getting ten. And why? Because in these days of motors, it is hunting, and hunting alone, which provides the constant supply in time of peace which is required by the Army in time of War. In this case the War Office, or rather the Remount Department, was remarkable for a degree of careful preparation two years before the War occurred, which has not been remarkable in a good many other departments that we have heard of. What did they do? Two years before the War they took a census of all the horses in the country through 500 of their own officers. They knew where the horses were, and that is why they were able to get so splendid a supply in their first levy. That was due, as I say, to hunting, and it was due to hunting that when the regiments went out from England, they said that never were regiments so splendidly mounted before. What else is necessary to prove that hunting is requisite, and that the horse supply of this country is a national asset which is due entirely to racing and hunting alone? We have never had any support or help up to the present time to speak of like that received from every other foreign Government in the world. We have had to do it, and we have done it successfully up to the present time, entirely by ourselves, and if reasonable facilities were given to us, I have not a single doubt that we should continue to do it in the future. The whole truth, gentlemen, is this: There is racing on the one hand which provides the blood which is necessary for our purposes, and the purposes of the War, to provide cavalry horses of the type which the War Office themselves say that they want, because they call it the hunter type. Racing, on the one hand, I repeat, provides the blood, and hunting, on the other, provided the constant demand in time of peace for the commodity, and is the only thing which secures for the Army the constant necessary and ready supply which they require in time of War. That, in

my judgment, is amply, and more than amply, sufficient justification both for racing and hunting, because without those two individual British sports coupled together, you could not possibly, under our existing circumstances, have what is a great national asset for the purposes of the nation namely—the proper horse supply for this country.”

Lord Chaplin’s speech and the representations by other prominent members of the M.F.H. Association carried the day, and those enemies of fox-hunting who sought to abolish the sport were silenced. Nevertheless, it became necessary—because of the scarcity of foodstuffs—to put down many hounds and send others overseas. With the craze for good looks still dominant, I am afraid that, in some countries at any rate, the choice of hounds to be *kept* was influenced more by good looks than by working qualities, and when, after four years of hostilities, peace was at last restored, the working qualities had been lost—to a certain extent.

I do not mean to imply that the foxhound of that period had really deteriorated; but it must be remembered that nothing that is capable of progression or retrogression stands still. It either goes forward or back, one might fairly say, is true of the foxhound. It is a difficult matter to compare anything which existed a hundred—or even fifty—years ago, with something of a similar nature in modern times; because, not only do fashions change, but the conditions of existence also vary enormously. In the case of the foxhound, whose existence in the world is justified by its ability to hunt and kill foxes, this is particularly true because of the conditions under which the chase is carried on to-day. No one can doubt that the modern foxhound has many more difficulties to overcome in hunting a fox at the present time than his ancestors had to contend with fifty—or even twenty-five—years ago.

During the period which followed the first World War, the increase in automobile traffic, bringing with it the

tarred roads and the nauseous gases which emanate from passing cars, presented a very serious obstacle to any hound attempting to carry a line down an arterial road. One must realise that foxes, with their keen sense of self-preservation, which enables them to take instant advantage of anything which militates in their favour, are fully aware of this change. Moreover, the general draining of the soil and the ever-increasing use of artificial manures made scenting conditions far more difficult. But those conditions had come to stay, and had to be met in one way or another. It was the attempt by thoughtful Masters to breed a type of hound which could best combat these difficulties which led to divergence in type regulated by the country and the conditions of hunting, which caused a lot of discussion.

Perhaps no one man played a bigger part in this change of type than Mr. Isaac Bell, who during his Mastership of the South and West Wilts built up a pack of hounds which for their work became famous throughout England. "Ikey" Bell is an American, although he has lived most of his life in the British Isles. Beginning his hunting career in Ireland, he had the Galway Blazers from 1903 to 1908, and later took the Kilkenny, remaining there until 1921, except during those years when he was on active service in the first World War, and breeding some hounds whose names have made history in the pedigrees of to-day. Later, in 1925, he took on the South and West Wilts, remaining in office there for ten years, until incapacitated by ill health, and during that period he bred a pack which was outstanding in its work in a country where hunting conditions are anything but good. Not only that, but the influence of the hounds which have been produced there on the type of many of the foremost packs in England has had a lasting effect. I have already spoken of Sir Edward Curre's famous "White Pack," which hunted the country about Chepstow and Newport on the western side of the River Severn, adjoining the country hunted by the Llangibby; and I

think that to Sir Edward Curre should always go the credit of producing in its perfection a type of hound which must always stand alone.

Nor must I omit the name of another famous Master, Sir Ian Amory, now deceased, who once wrote, "There are in England two schools of hound-breeding; one of which is trying to breed hounds which are good-looking and sometimes kill foxes, and the other to breed hounds which kill foxes and are sometimes good-looking. I prefer the latter sort; it is a question to which there should only be one another." Sir Ian lived up to his creed, and scorning all criticism—friendly or otherwise—he produced a pack which showed wonderful sport in the country in which he hunted it. Not only that, but he produced a stallion hound—Tiverton Actor '22—who has left his mark on many of the best packs in England. Used freely in the Badminton Kennels by the present Master, the 10th Duke of Beaufort, Tiverton Actor sired a long list of stallion hounds who not only were brilliant in the field, but also won repeatedly at Peterborough and begot a long line of descendants which have placed the Badminton in the forefront of the foxhound packs of England to-day—both in the field and on the flags. If one analyses the reasons for the great success of Tiverton Actor, however, one finds that his pedigree goes back, through Four Burrow Whipcord '05, to the very best lines of the old Berkeley blood—always famous for its working qualities, since the days when Tom Oldaker wore the yellow livery of the Earls of Berkeley.

Master after Master saw the improvement that the infusion of a little Welsh blood—sometimes it was "Curre" blood—perhaps it would be more polite to say the blood which came from the kennels at Itton Court—brought to the working qualities of the packs into which it was introduced, and by 1930 one found the names of Sir Edward Curre's stallion hounds in seventy-five per cent of the entries in the Foxhound Kennel Stud Book. Masters there

were who did not believe in the innovation—men like the late Earl Bathurst, “Parson” Milne, and Mr. Edward Barclay—to name a few. But even many of the old “die-hards” remembered the poem by H. Cumberland Bentley, which was dedicated to Mr. Lort-Phillips, who was active in hunting circles from 1882 to 1895—and pondered. Mr. J. B. S. Bullen, an old Dorsetshire sportsman, who hunted with Squire Farquharson many years ago, sent it to me.

“DIMPLE.” A MEMORY OF 1894.

Dedicated to F. Lort-Phillips, Esq., M.F.H.

Instigated by “Brooksby’s” remark in *The Field*—“A mysterious yellow bitch that led us all day.”

“The Pytchley Hounds are running hard across the Badby Vale,

They fly like swallows on the wing although it blows a gale;

’Twould make an old man young, I swear, to see so brave a sight .

As scarlet flashes past and gleams the Pytchley collar white.

“Beware, beware the double, be careful how you ride,

A ditch on the take-off and on the further side:

The chestnut has it in his stride, and jumping short, comes down,

But quick as thought the grey kicks back and lands like thistledown.

“But see, the pack are scattered, for baffled by the stain

Left by the herded cattle, they seek the line in vain.

Hark! There’s a distant holloa, and down the highway there

That sandy bitch has got it—she’s right again, I’ll swear.

"Fast fly the golden minutes, yet all throughout the run
The sandy bitch cuts out the work, and shows them *all*
the fun.

She's there from find to finish, she leads from first to last,
Until 'Who-whoop' it's over, the gallop's done and
past.

"And now all ask in vain what hound it was that did so
well,

Both whips are questioned, but don't know, or *if* they
do, *won't* tell.

Where did she come from? What's her name? Come,
Goodall, won't you say?

'It's "Dimple,"' Goodall says at last, and turning,
rides away.

"His Reverence has his hound book out, and breathes an
inward prayer,

His eyes may not be going amiss, for 'Dimple' is *not*
there.

And others wait and hang about, expecting soon he'll show
Them 'Dimple's' sire, and 'Dimple's' dam, but find
he doesn't know.

"Perhaps she hails from grassy Quorn, or Meynell's
staunchest strain

Mingled with blood from Belvoir sire runs sparkling
through her vein,

From Grafton, or from Warwickshire, or Beaufort's
further bounds,

Perhaps she came from Brocklesby; Cottesmore, or
Selby-Lowndes.

"Day after day, it's just the same, 'Dimple' is always there,
In wind or sunshine, sleet or hail, or plough, or grass-
land fair,

She leads them all, farmers and squires and lords and
 ladies gay
 Vainly enquire whence she came, but Goodall still
 won't say.

"Till Christmas time has passed away with all its gladsome
 cheer
 And midnight bells with joyous chime have hailed
 another year.
 And with the New Year's wishes fair, sportsmen each
 other greet
 And some few idly wonder—'Dimple's' not at the meet.

"'Tis then we learn her pedigree, and what's her dam and
 sire
 From Wales, Lort-Phillips sent her down to fair
 Northamptonshire.
 He sent her here to test her nose, her courage and her
 speed
 And seek comparison with hounds of the famed
 Pytchley breed.

"No more her melody we'll hear, no more she'll lead the
 pack
 Until they break from scent to view, for 'Dimple' has
 gone back.

"DIMPLE—Llangibby DANGER sire; her dam from Taunton
 Vale
 No more will be our pilot, o'er Pytchley hill and dale."

In his letter to me, Mr. Bullen added: "I knew Lort-Phillips well and hunted with him—both when he was Master of the North Warwickshire and later, when he was Master of a Welsh pack. How well I remember, too, 'Brooksby's' article in *The Field* and his eulogy of the

unknown bitch 'Dimple,' whose exploits are set forth in the above poem—it made quite a flutter in the hunting world at that time."

One cannot help wondering whether the seed of Welsh infiltration had really begun as early as 1894, and lain dormant for many years. Be that as it may, more and more Masters began to see the results that the Welsh blood brought, and one of the most conservative of them all—Mr. George Evans of the "H.H."—completely reversed his breeding policy and became a staunch supporter of Curre blood, as did many another of the "old brigade."

Hunting seemed to have taken on a new lease of life, and the one dark cloud on what appeared to be the dawn of a new era was the ever-present fear of war. When that came, in 1939, just as a new season was starting, it was an overpowering shock.

Quick to take advantage of the fact that hunting people—Masters, Hunt servants, and followers in the Field—were the first to rally to the defence of the nation, the enemies of hunting launched their attack on the sport, and were loud in their demands that hunting should be done away with—forbidden by law, etc., etc. Happily there were men in the Government who realised its importance in the life of the country, and, although what was true regarding the importance of horses for the use of the Army in 1914 did not apply in 1939, arrangements for its continuance, along reduced lines, were promptly made. At first it was even thought that horses might be needed for military purposes, and a small levy was made on the hunting stables of the land; but it was soon found that this was unnecessary—the modern army is motorised—and the horses which were commandeered were returned; but the willingness with which their initial requests had been met had made a good impression on the Government, and thanks to the tactful, but urgent, representations made to them by the M.F.H. Association, rations were provided for the maintenance of

a sufficient number of horses and hounds to keep hunting alive, and the future of the sport was assured.

That is, the future of hunting was assured so far as the passive acquiescence of the Government went; but there was still one very great obstacle to be overcome—*finances*. I remember very well, at the end of the first year of War, sitting in a Committee Meeting of the Hunt of which I am now Joint-Master. There was a discussion as to whether we could carry on or not. One man said: "Well—I guess we can pull through this year and possibly a second; but if the War continues after that, hunting will be done for good—and once it is stopped, we can never get it started again." That was before Dunkirk, and before the black days when the country was sorely threatened with invasion—but, *somehow*, hunting survived. In the country in which I lived—that same country of which Peter Beckford said, that all the gentlemen were sportsmen—we had some good hunts under wartime conditions; though the number of foxes killed was below the average, owing to the impossibility of proper earth-stopping.

I remember one day in particular—it was in 1942, just after the good news of the British successes in Egypt had put us all in a jubilant state of mind. Hounds met at Higher Waterston, where, almost a hundred years before, Squire Farquharson, who ruled over the country for half a century, announced his intention of resigning the Mastership. There had been a sharp frost during the night; but once the morning mist had cleared away and the sun came through, it was as perfect an autumn day as could be imagined. An American misses the brilliant autumn foliage on this side of the water—the scarlet of the maples, the dark crimson of the oaks, and the bright yellow of the birches—though perhaps the rich green of the grassland—which one sees all through the English winter—makes up for it. There were great patches of brown in those days, for there was more fallow land than ever before, and the whole

countryside which lay spread out before us, as we topped Waterson Ridge on our way to the meet, looked like a checker-board laid out in green and brown. There were only a few people at the fixture, but presently we heard the sound of horses' feet on the Puddletown road, and then the Huntsman's scarlet coat was visible through the trees as he came on alone with 14½ couple of the South Dorset bitches clustering close about his pony's heels. He put the pony in a neighbouring farm-barn; mounted the hunter which I had led on for him; and looked inquiringly at me.

I glanced at my watch, and as the time for the meet had come, I nodded and we moved away, for even in those War-time days we tried to live up to the time-honoured habit of punctuality. About half a mile up a green lane which branched off from the main road, our Huntsman put his hounds into a field of roots; but almost before they could begin to draw, a young bitch spoke, in a thicket near me, and a few seconds later out jumped a very dirty cub—I suppose he had been lying in the muddy root-field—which crossed the lane and, turning sharp left, ran up the meadow beyond. Hounds came to my holloa, tumbling over the low hedge and swinging in a lovely cast in the field beyond. They seemed to hit the line all at once, for there was a great burst of music from the pack and they raced up the valley towards Doles Wood at a great pace, only to mark their fox in an open earth, half a mile beyond. That began our day's sport, which went on intermittently for the next two hours. And then we got it.

We had marked at least two brace and a half to ground, and apparently lost another one in some gorses on the Hogleaze outside Doles Plantation. He had given us a good gallop; had nearly been killed by hounds in a field of mustard ten minutes before; but he had beaten the pack by slipping through a narrow smeuse in a hedge. Our half-fit horses were tired; corn was not plentiful in those days; and I was frankly rather relieved when hounds

failed to hit off the line at the end of the Huntsman's cast.

"I think we'd better call it a day," I said, "horses seem to me to have had enough." There was a murmur of acquiescence from the few who remained in the Field, and I signalled to Will, who blew for his hounds. I could hear our Whipper-in—a girl whose husband was serving with the Forces in Africa—rating them out of covert to him. Most of them were out and we were just starting to move towards home, when a hound spoke inside the gorse; followed an instant later by Anne's holloa. Hounds needed no cheering; they were away like a flash; and by the time we had gotten around that patch of gorse, they had settled to their fox and were driving on hard for Doles Ash Farm. Just short of the road which runs by Lyscombe, the pack swung back left-handed, running hard over the fields to Doles Plantation, heading for the main earth, where we had put three other foxes to ground that morning. Miss Debenham went to the left of the Plantation. "Miss Anne" to the right; and by this manœuvre, "Mr. Charles," headed from his earth, had to make a point, and chose to set his mask across the meadows towards Bourne Hill. Anne viewed him here and told me afterwards that he seemed to be full of running—he certainly carried an excellent scent—for hounds drove on, up the hillside, heading for Dewlish, at a pace which told on our tired horses.

"My horse is all in," the girl said to me, as I galloped past her. "I don't know whether I can get him over this next fence or not." The Huntsman was riding Mrs. Stansfeld's Piper, a gallant little piebald, who had carried her brilliantly through many a hunt before the War, and he crossed that fence safely, as he had crossed many another. I came next and then our Whipper-in, and, remembering that she had said her horse was all in, I turned around to see if there was a smash. But the thoroughbred blood in his veins stood him in good stead, for he not only negotiated

the fence safely, but galloped by me a minute later and was soon close behind the Huntsman.

In this order we ran for two or three miles; hounds running across the open between Hill Copse and Well Close Covert, and then, skirting Druce Farm Eweleaze, they crossed the Chebbard road and, leaving Bardolf on their left, ran down to Stafford Farm, and into Lower Puddletown village—where they checked. Will cast a'round, but failed to recover the line—and it looked as if our fox had taken refuge in one of the outbuildings near the farmhouse. The Field—or what was left of it—began to come up; Miss Debenham, Mr. Whitehead and one or two others; and it looked as if the hunt was over; when, suddenly, I noticed an old bitch feathering on a line which led into an open barn door. She didn't speak, but she was very interested, and I called Will's attention to her. He slipped off his horse and went into the barn on foot; but came out a minute later, with a somewhat crestfallen expression.

"I think he's been in there," he said, "but he's not there now. He must have gone on." Mounting again, he cast his hounds around the barn and, sure enough, in the field beyond they hit off the line again, and settling down, ran across the London road and up the meadows, past Ilsington House. We followed as best we could, but our horses were very tired, and Lismore, the chestnut which had carried "Miss Anne" so well, had lost both his front shoes and was going very tender.

"Better stop them," I said to Will; but that was easier said than done. Will blew his horn; "Miss Anne" did her best as hounds came to the Bournemouth road; but it was no use, and they drove across and ran for Athelhampton Wood a mile beyond. Luckily there was a bit of fallow ground beyond that, and there Will managed to stop them when they checked on the plough, and, bring them back to us, where we stood by our tired horses, waiting for them.

I looked at my watch and found that we had been running

an hour and twenty minutes. In pre-War days we would have called it a very good hunt; under wartime conditions, it was a real "snorter"—a hunt that we talked about for the rest of the season.

That was more than two years ago, and typical of the times. As everyone knows, hunting did not cease. It was not easy—the future is not going to be easy—but in most countries—particularly the smaller ones, where the farmers are the staunch supporters of the sport—no one has seriously considered the possibility of giving it up, despite the discouraging criticism of people who seem to feel that to attempt to keep hunting going is merely to prolong an agony and, moreover, that it is not essential to the economic welfare of the nation.

Perhaps not. But I, for one, cannot visualise an England without fox-hunting. It is a democratic sport, so hailed by England's Poet Laureate, John Masefield, whose words in the Introduction to that great poem—"Reynard the Fox" I have often quoted. At the risk of boring my readers with repetition, I will do so again:—

"As a man grows older, life becomes more interesting but less easy to know; for, late in life, even the strongest yields to the habit of his compartment. When he cannot range through all society, from the court to the gutter, a man must go where all society meets, as at the Pilgrimage, the Festival, or the Game. Here in England, the Game is both a festival and an occasion of pilgrimage. A man wanting to set down a picture of the society of England will find his models at the games.

"What are the English Games? The man's game is Association Football; the woman's game, perhaps hockey or lacrosse. Golf I regard more as a symptom of a happy marriage than a game. Cricket, which was once widely popular among both sexes, has lost its hold, except among the young. The worst of all these games is that few can play them at a time.

"But in the English country, during the autumn, winter, and early spring of each year, the main sport is fox-hunting, which is not, like cricket or football, a game for a few and a spectacle for many, but something in which all who come may take a part, whether rich or poor, mounted or on foot. It is a sport loved and followed by both sexes, all ages, and all classes. At a fox-hunt, and nowhere else in England, except perhaps at a funeral, can you see the whole of the land's society brought together, focused for the observer as the Canterbury pilgrims were for Chaucer."

I am very much inclined to think that fox-hunting, as it was carried on after the set-back it received during the first World War, will not come back as quickly and completely as it did then. That era, so like the old days in its customs and manners, with the almost feudal atmosphere, which added much to its charm, may perhaps be a thing of the past; but I do feel that those happy days engendered by the great sport of fox-hunting—which is a part of England's heritage—will come again, as soon as the aftermath of the cataclysm which has rocked the world has ceased. One hears unpleasant rumours that this or that pack of foxhounds has been given up; one sees unpleasant bits in a newspaper, telling of the wholesale destruction of foxes; and—worst of all—one hears of the death at the front of prominent hunting men, whose support could have been counted on in rehabilitating the sport—now that the War is over. One hears some younger people who were children at the time when the first World War ended, say: "Fox-hunting can never recover; no one will carry it on; it will be merely a memory." To them I would say that one heard all these things at the end of the last War, and that not only did fox-hunting survive, but it came to life again, as good—or better—than ever. In fact, I think its *renaissance*—if one may call it that—was almost too luxurious. From being the sport which was enjoyed "by both sexes, all ages, and all classes . . ." it deteriorated into a sport in which money

played a big part. No hacking or driving to meets, as in the old days; the advent of the motor car put an end to that; and in the shires one saw long lines of motor horse-boxes drawn up near the meet, which vomited forth hunters for men who came from *outside* the "country"—often from London—by motor car. The coming of the automobile and the motor horse-boxes and the motor lorries necessitated changes in the surface of the roads—in fact, one might say that the so-called "modern improvements" played havoc with the democracy of fox-hunting.

The innovations came first in the fashionable countries, near the great business centres, and the countries which might be termed "Provincial" were slower to feel the change, which indeed affected the countries in the more remote parts of England very little. The "outsiders"—the people who came into any given district for the hunting only, who did not mean to settle there, who took no interest in the life of the parish in which they happened to be temporarily resident—have not returned, nor are they wanted by the people who are part and parcel of the life of the community. Hunting in these districts will be carried on by the men who come back from the War, and by the farmers who stayed at home to till the soil and grow the food that kept the nation alive, and by the younger generations who have grown up during the War. Fox-hunting will continue under the management of the dwellers on the land, be they landowners or tenants, all working together towards a common end—and by the children whose love of sport, particularly of fox-hunting, has been fostered by that grand institution, the Institute of the Horse and Pony Club, which has kept alive the interest in hunting among the younger generation during the time their fathers and mothers have been "away at the Wars."

As in the past, the Masters of Foxhounds Association and the British Field Sports Society have done sterling work in the lean years which are, happily for all of us, if not

quite over, at least on the wane. The M.F.H. Association, at a recent meeting, authorised the publication of a new Book of Rules, which is now available to the public for their guidance and for their further instruction concerning the continuance of the sport during the years to come. The definition of fox-hunting in the very first paragraph—"Fox-hunting as a Sport—is the hunting of the fox in his wild and natural state with a pack of hounds"—by its closing words defines clearly the one great outstanding feature which will silence all critics of the sport who strive to discredit it.

Under the able chairmanship of the present Duke of Beaufort, M.F.H., the tenth of his line, England and the world can rest assured that the sport of fox-hunting will have a new start in the years before us.

THE END

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